

NOBLE DYNASTIES

The History of Nur Ad-Din & Saladin

Imam Abu Shamah `Abd Ar-Rahman Al-Maqdisi

Edited By

Dr. Muhammad Musa Al-Shareef

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مختصر كتاب الروضتين في أخبار الدولتين

نور الدين زنكي و صلاح الدين الأيوبي

Imam Abu Shamah `Abd Ar-Rahman Al-Maqdisi

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P.O. Box: 11203 Jeddah 21453 K.S.A

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Email: info@islamic-ef.org

بريد إلكتروني: info@islamic-ef.org

Translated, Edited and Prepared by:

Al-Falah Foundation



24 at-Tayaran st. Nasr city, Cairo, Egypt
Tel. / Fax: (+2) 02 2622838 - (+2) 02 4039169
Website: www.falahonline.com
E-mail: info@falahonline.com

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Contents

Preface

We should revisit the past to learn lessons from it. Every nation underwent significant landmarks in their history that highlighted great and talented men and women, and leaders who changed the course of history.

This book is a biography of some of those unique people who were renowned of their sincerity, magnanimous feats, and great influence. They emerged when Islam was about to fade out and when the enemy was occupying more than half of the Levant. The Muslims at that time were divided into small territories and were ruled by scanty autonomous governments. The caliphate in Cairo and Baghdad was only a name. The Franks had occupied Muslim territories for more than fifty years. They were huge in number and backed by Europe.

The Muslims thought they were to live in this unceasing phase of trouble and strife. Then along came two men who raised the banner of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an and awoke the people reminding them of their freedom. After that the Muslims had the upper hand and achieved a great victory.

It is impossible to be defeated under the shade of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an. However, divergence from the Ever-Glorious Qur'an, doing injustices, and following our desires are fatal mistakes that have always brought about loss and inferiority. This was the

methodology of Nur ad-Din and Saladin: to bring people back to the Ever-Glorious Qur'an and show them the way to salvation.

This book recounts their story when they freed the shackled Muslim *Ummah* and restored their sublime position in the world.

This book in hand is a translation of an Arabic book titled [*Mukhtasar Kitab Ar-Rawdatayn Fi Akhbar Ad-Dawlatayn*] compiled by Imam Abi Shamah, revised by Dr. Muhammad Musa Al-Shareef and published by Dar Al-Andalus Al-Khadra'. Since translation is an arduous task that requires precision and dedication, we have exerted ourselves to produce this precious work, but perfection is only Divine. In addition, due to the delicate nature of the subject as well as the special style of the Arabic language, the translation in hand is not literal; our translators and revisers have done their best to render the text presentable and legible. On various occasions they have amended the Arabic text by way of paraphrasing, rearranging and summarizing.

Al-Falah Foundation would like to thank **Tal`at Faruq, Nirvan Tal`at, Ashraf Said, Faruq Rizq,** and **Su`ad Najib** who translated the book. Great appreciation is due to **Selma Cook, Abdel Hamid Eliwa** and **Ahmad M. Hasan**; our editors and revisers, under whose guidance and supervision the subject matter took form.

Finally, we ask Allah to make this work of benefit for Islam and the Muslims and to forgive our errors and omissions. All praise and thanks are due to Allah, without Whose Help and Guidance nothing can be accomplished.

Al-Falah General Director
Sheikh Muhammad `Abdu

Foreword

All praise and thanks are due to Allah who raised the minaret of this true religion and exalted its rank by the hands of the righteous people and the true believers. Such people were as sublime as stars in the heaven and the moon on a dark night.

I testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His Servant and Faithful Messenger. He is the Master of all Creation, may Allah's peace be upon him, his household and Companions.

The glorious history of Islam is a great contribution to all nations, as it is filled with determination and ignites such emotions in our souls. Muslims illuminated the world after passing through a long period of darkness. They raised an insurmountable civilization and glory. They became the real bearers of Islam and saved it from deviation and bewilderness, as they exerted all their effort to attain the standards our Lord, the Almighty prescribed. The earth was adorned with their light, and the heavens were embellished with the nobility of martyrs; who were great examples of devotion and sincerity. Regardless of the shining example of the pious, there have always been stubborn and arrogant disbelievers indulging more and more in the vanity of this life and adhering to falsehood, while turning a deaf ear and a blind eye to the truth. They conspired against the victorious army and gathered their forces to encounter it. Thus, the Muslims were compelled to launch raids and attack them back. This is an

example of one of the unalterable Divine ways: Whenever the Muslims finds no way out, the kingdoms of polytheism assemble letting every false person launches skirmishes against them, then Allah, the Great and Almighty, endows the believers with a great victory and thus the disbelievers are disappointed.

We know from history that since the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) until now the disbelievers have attacked the Muslims many times. Almighty Allah says, *Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: 'We believe,' and will not be tested.* ﴿[1]

It is beneficial for Muslims to explain these facts to people as there are many misconceptions about Islam and Muslims. Furthermore, through knowing these things the believers will be reassured that victory will come even if we have to wait and be patient for a period of time. Allah, the Almighty says, *And on that Day, the believers (i.e. Muslims) will rejoice - with the help of Allah. He helps whom He wills, and He is the All- Mighty, the Most Merciful.* ﴿[2]

There are parallels in history to what we are facing today. We can find similar examples of strife and conflict during the dynasties of the two great rulers: Nur ad-Din and Saladin. Understanding the historical context of such challenges is beneficial to Muslims today, so I decided to let the reader know about the events that occurred at the time of Nur ad-Din and Saladin.

Initially I intended to write a biography and compose an all-inclusive book until Allah guided and enabled me to read Imam Abu Shamah's great book *Kitab Ar-Rawdatayn Fi Akhbar Ad-Dawlatayn* (The Two Gardens on the History of the Two Dynasties). Thus, I

1. Al-'Ankabut: 2.
2. Ar-Rum: 4-5

decided to abridge this book and set aside the idea of composing a book of my own.

The significance of Abu Shamah's book

First, it has an all-inclusive narration of significant historical events.

Second, it gives a full account of the feats of the two rulers: Nur ad-Din and Saladin. This is extremely significant as their biographies were great, especially that of Nur ad-Din. Indeed, his biography captivated me. I believe that both great rulers will be Allah's argument against the presidents and kings of today.

Third, the events mentioned in this book are similar to what we witness today. The crusaders dominated the holy lands and the coast of the Levant[1] for a long time. Then Allah sent Nur ad-Din to fight in Allah's Cause against them until one of his rulers, Saladin, managed to restore al-Aqsa mosque and defeat them. This is similar to what is happening today; the Jews have been violating the holy lands for a long time and the Muslims are awaiting a leader who will defeat them again in the near future.

Fourth, dozens of feats that are mentioned in this book motivate and give hope to the believers' souls. Also, this book contains many events that depict the great sincerity and faith these people had in the Almighty. Furthermore, it illustrates the unity between the sultans and the scholars and how this is necessary to attain victory.

Fifth, it mentions some biographies of scholars, viziers, and princes in addition to the biographies of the two rulers that serve to enrich this great book.

1 It includes the countries bordering on the eastern Mediterranean Sea from Turkey to Egypt.

It is noteworthy here to mention Judge `Abd ar-Rahim al-Bisani (Judge al-Fadil) who was the advisor of Saladin. He had a great impact on Saladin and supported him in the way of *Jihad*; thus Saladin said to the leaders of his army, "Do not ever think that we conquered territories by your swords; we did so by the pen of Judge al-Fadil."

My contribution to this book

Kitab Ar-Rawdatayn is a considerably large book and was published and printed in Egypt in 1287 A.C. and 1288 A.C. The book was written in a small font that could not be easily read; if the book had been edited properly, it would have been released in five huge volumes. I found an edited part that was published in 1382 A.C. in one volume, but it contained mistakes. However, this part is very difficult to find nowadays in either public or private libraries. Moreover, Imam Abu Shamah himself abridged this book and it was printed in two volumes and verified by Mr. Ahmad al-Baysumi. However, it lacked significant events that included lessons and examples for mankind today.

Due to the aforementioned reasons, I decided to abridge this book,*Kitab Ar-Rawdatayn Fi Akhbar Ad-Dawlatayn* The procedure of my work was as follows:

- I removed from the book all the events that had no significant lesson for the reader. Also, I removed any unnecessary digressions and details in order to minimize the book; as I am sure that a huge volume could only be read by a small number of people.
- The author, Abu Shamah, used to narrate the event twice: the first time according to a rhymed narration of `Imad ad-Din al-Asfahani and the second time according to the narration of Judge Ibn Shaddad, Ibn Abi Tayy or others that contained no rhymes. Thus, I

decided to use the narration that had no rhymes and I included it in this summarized work. I might have combined them if al-Asfahany`s narration was of benefit and if it mentioned other narrations.

- I adapted most of these narrations in a way that is cohesive with the context to keep the meaning unchanged.

Finally, I ask Allah the Almighty, to grant me success, knowledge void of ignorance, a feat without hypocrisy, words spoken truthfully and faithfully, a state of trustworthy ethics and sagacity with sincerity. O Allah, may You never let down the believer who is committed to You, nor refuse a hand stretched out for Your aid, nor humiliate a soul which is mighty owing to believing in You, nor deprive a mind of its intellectual power as this mind is enlightened by the light of Your guidance. O Allah, may You never blindfold an eye that is opened by virtue of Your grace, nor gag a tongue that is used to praise You. As You are graceful, endow us with Your bounties; my destiny is in Your hand, my face prostrates to You, righteousness and graces are Your due because of Your greatness and my doom is predestined by You.

May You envelop us in the mantle of infallibility in this transient life, adorn us in the everlasting abode with the embellishment of security and let our souls be weaned from seeking worldly pleasures. May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad, his household and all his Companions. All praise and thanks are due to Allah.

Muhammad Musa Al-Shareef

The Biography of the Compiler

He is the great Imam and jurist, `Abd ar-Rahman ibn Isma`il ibn Ibrahim, born in Damascus in 599 A.H. (1202 A.C.). Abu Shamah[1] was his nickname because he had a big mole above his left eyebrow. He recited the Holy Qur'an when he was 9 years old. He perfected the various ways of recitations when he was 17 and he learnt the Prophetic traditions. He worked as a teacher, delivered legal opinions, and excelled in the Arabic language.

He was modest; he never rivalled with others to gain new positions or posts. He preferred seclusion and he pursued knowledge since his early childhood until the day he passed away.

Two men, presumably from the sect of al-Batiniyyah who were renowned for killing scholars and pious men, came to him pretending that they were asking him for a legal opinion. They beat him severely and no one could come to his aid, as his house was in the suburbs of the city. He died on 19th of Ramadan in 665 A.H. (1169 A.C.) (may the mercy of Allah be upon him).

1. Shamah in the Arabic language means a mole.

Introduction

All praise is due to Allah. It is through His Kindness that our deeds become acceptable and it is through His Generosity and Bounty that our hopes are realized. Our deeds are subject to His Will and according to His Will, things change. Glory be to Him the Everlasting, the Knower of the Unseen and the Seen, the Most Great, the Most High, the Acceptor of repentance, the Severe in punishment, the Bestower (of favors). We praise Him for all His Blessings and Bounties. All peace and prayers be upon His Prophet and Messenger Muhammad ibn `Abdullah the owner of the highest honor, lofty grace, deep-rooted knowledge, beauty, and perfection. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, the closest angels, the Prophets, the Messengers, and all those who follow in their footsteps whenever a star eclipses or shines. May Allah forgive those who are negligent and lazy in their worship from among the nation of Prophet Muhammad and may we be resurrected among his Companions and under his banner on the Day of Judgment where there will be no buying, selling or any close-fellowship. Ameen!

[1] After I spent most of my life learning religious knowledge and literary masterpieces, I thought that I should turn my attention to the study of history hoping that I may benefit from it and find a true example in our blessed ancestors. Our Imams used to tell us about their greatness.

Mus`ab az-Zubayri said about Imam Abu `Abdullah ash-Shafi`i (may Allah be pleased with him), "I have never known a person who is more knowledgeable of history than ash-Shafi`i." Also it was reported that he studied history and literature for twenty years and whenever he was asked about that he would answer, "I did so only to master *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence)."

This will be of great benefit for us, as the history of former nations and their successors is full of useful examples and lessons. Allah, the Almighty, says,

> ﴿*And all that We relate to you (O Muhammad) of the news of the messengers is in order that We may make strong and firm your heart thereby. And in this has come to you the truth, as well as an admonition and a reminder for the believers.*﴾[1]

And,

> ﴿*And indeed there has come to them news (in this Qur'an) wherein there is (enough warning) to check (them from evil). Perfect wisdom (this Qur'an), but (the preaching of) warners benefits them not.*﴾[2]

In addition, our Prophet (peace be upon him) narrated some events about what happened during the pre-Islamic period and the times of the Children of Israel; he (peace be upon him) said, *"Relate the stories of the Children of Israel (which have been taught to you), for it is not sinful to do so."*[3] Also, he (peace be upon him) narrated what he saw during the Night Journey.

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1. Hud: 120.
2. Al-Qamar: 4-5.
3. Reported by al-Bukhari.

[2] The Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Followers continued to study the accounts of previous nations; their travels, poetry, etc. As they are our fine examples, we should follow in their footsteps. Hence, I turned all my attention to this field and read studiously. I spent a long time searching and studying. At last, I managed - praise be to Allah - to learn much about the Prophets, the Messengers, the Companions, the Followers, the Caliphs, sultans, jurists, the scholars of *Hadith*, the pious, poets, grammarians, and many others. I discovered that reading the history of those people is like living with them at their time.

I would like to quote these two lines of poetry:

A book to read is my cynosure,
The sweetest habit I always adore;
Breathing life into centuries past,
Enlivening people now buried in the dust.

Allah destined us to be the last nation and showed us the tidings of the former nations in order to be warned about what happened to them. We should follow in the footsteps of the Prophets and good Imams with whom we hope to be gathered in Paradise; as everyone will be gathered (on the Day of Judgment) with those whom he loved most.

[3] The person who is ignorant of history is like the rider of a blind beast which wanders aimlessly. He may assign the accounts of the former nations to the modern and vice versa. If he is retorted, it will make no difference to him. If he is reminded, he will not take heed. He does not distinguish between a Companion and a Follower, a Hanafi (a follower of Imam Abu Hanifah) and a Shafi`i (a follower of

Imam ash-Shafi`i), a Caliph and a prince, or a sultan and a minister. Such ignorant persons do not know about Muhammad ibn `Abdullah (peace be upon him) more than that he was a messenger; consequently, they know nothing about the Companions and the Followers.

[4] I witnessed an assembly of thirteen scholars including the Chief Justice and other dignitaries. They were discussing the issue of the relatives of the Prophet who were forbidden to receive alms. They all said, "They are the sons of Hashim and the sons of `Abd al-Muttalib." Actually, they were all wrong and I wondered at their ignorance as they did not differentiate between `Abd al-Muttalib and al-Muttalib; they did not recognize that al-Muttalib was the uncle of `Abd al-Muttalib who was the son of Hashim. This is negligent! This matter is a principal part of Islamic *Shari`ah* which they neglected and an important branch of knowledge which they did not take heed of. According to the judgment of those people, the sons of al-Muttalib are to be stripped of this moral excellence.

I sincerely wished to seek Allah's Pleasure and I rejected to be like them. Thus, I began to study history, ascribe things back to their true sources and explain their destination. This is because a lot of those who knew about the words of people neglected to ascribe them to their real owners.

[5] Then, I wanted to compile these events into one book and master what I had learned. So, I resorted to the biggest book ever written in this field, *Tarikh Madinat Dimashq* [The History of Damascus] and managed to abridge it. *Tarikh Madinat Dimashq* was written by the authoritative expert Abu al-Qasim `Ali ibn al-Hasan al-`Asakri (Ibn `Asakir), and it consists of eight hundred parts

published in eighty volumes. In this great book, I read the biography of king Nur ad-Din and I was delighted to know about him and I was impressed to know about his great influence. Then I read about king Saladin. At their time they were like the two Rightly-guided Caliphs Abu Bakr and `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them all). All of them followed in the footsteps of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in justice and *Jihad*; they spared no effort to strengthen Islam. Thus, I discovered that it was essential to highlight the superiority of these two great rulers, i.e. Nur ad-Din and Saladin.

[6] I decided to designate a study about their kingdoms including their achievements and presenting them in such a way that guides any king who does not know them personally and does not follow their example. These noble kings may be an argument from Allah against the kings and leaders of our time. Allah the Almighty says, ﴾*And remind for verily, reminding profits the believers.*﴿[1]

The kings of our times can never regard themselves to ever be like the Rightly-guided Caliphs and those who followed their example including the former Imams. If some of our kings today allege that these former kings belonged to a time gone by and that the Rightly-guided Caliphs were peerless, the biographies of these two recent rulers are an argument against them. Consider the words of Abu Salih Shu`ayb ibn Harb al-Mada'ini (may Allah be pleased with him) in order to grasp what I mean, "I think that Sufyan ath-Thawri may be brought on the Day of Judgment as an argument from Allah against people. They will be told, 'If you did not see your Prophet, you have already seen Sufyan. It would be better for you to follow his example."

1. Adh-Dhariyat: 55

[7] Thus, these two rulers are an argument against the kings and sultans of our time. They were closer to one another both in age and the duration of their reign; Nur ad-Din (may Allah have mercy on him) was born in 511 A.H. (1117 A.C.) and died in 569 A.H. (1173 A.C.), while Saladin (may Allah have mercy on him) was born in 532 A.H. (1137 A.C.) and died in 589 A.H. (1193 A.C.). They both lived for less than sixty years.

Nur ad-Din ruled Damascus in 549 A.H. (1154 A.C.), while Saladin ruled it in 570 A.H. (1174 A.C.). So, Damascus remained under Nur ad-Din for twenty years and for nineteen years under Saladin where evil deeds were uprooted and good ones prevailed. Nur ad-Din restored things by means of his justice, striving and gravity. He succeeded in bringing the light of Islam into many territories. Saladin strived more, took part in many wars and brought many territories under the realm of Islam. Furthermore, he managed to restore the Sacred Land, i.e. Jerusalem. May Allah be pleased with those two great rulers who deserved such a praise:

Allah has showered those in the grave
Plentiful mercy and ample grace,
By merciful prayers or kind acts,
They enjoy rest and gardens of delights.

[8] Some meritorious scholars have already preceded me in writing about the exploits of these two kings like Abu al-Qasim `Ali ibn al-Hasan ad-Dimashqi who wrote well about Nur ad-Din Mahmud ibn Zangi (may Allah have mercy upon him). Also, Abu Ya`la Hamzah ibn Asad at-Tamimi wrote about Nur ad-Din's reign; while sheikh `Izz ad-Din Abu al-Hasan `Ali ibn Muhammad ibn `Abd al-Karim al-Jazri (Ibn al-Athir) wrote about the reign of Saladin. Judge Baha' ad-Din

Abu al-Mahasin Yusuf ibn Rafi` ibn Tamim al-Musili (Ibn Shaddad) wrote about the exploits of Saladin and his conquests, and Imam `Imad ad-Din al-Katib Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Asfahani composed two rhymed books in a wonderful style about the conquests of Saladin and his biography and about the last days of Nur ad-Din.

I depended upon the works of al-Qadi (judge) al-Fadil `Abd ar-Rahim al-Bisani, the poetry of `Imad ad-Din al-Asfahani and other books and poetic works. Also, I depended on some trustworthy people who lived at that time. This brought about a wonderful book that I titled *Kitab Ar-Rawdatayn Fi Akhbar Ad-Dawlatayn* [literally, The Book of the the Two Gardens on the History of the Two Dynasties][1].

May Allah have mercy on Habib ibn Aws who said:

All those years and people passed by,
As if they were all a fleeting memory.

Chapter I
Nur ad-Din Mahmud Ibn Zangi

His full name is Nur ad-Din Abu al-Qasim Mahmud ibn `Imad ad-Din Atabeg (Abu Sa`id Zangi) ibn Qasim ad-Dawlah Aq Sunqur at-Turki. Also, he was called Zangi and Ibn al-Qasim.

[9] The scholar, Abu al-Qasim (Ibn `Asakir), mentioned in his book that Nur ad-Din was born in 511 A.H. (1117 A.C.). His grandfather Aq Sunqur ruled Aleppo and other places in the Levant;

1. *Noble Dynasties: The History of Nur ad-Din & Saladin.*

while his father Zangi was brought up in Iraq. Afterwards, he ruled Mosul and the Levant. Zangi conquered Edessa, al-Ma`arrah, Kafr Tab and many other cities delivering them from the disbelievers.

When Zangi passed away, his son Nur ad-Din succeeded him in 541 A.H. (1146 A.C.). Nur ad-Din conquered Aleppo and many other cities. In Aleppo, he supported all attempts to apply the prophetic Sunnah concerning *Adhan* (call to prayer) and he devoured the evil plots and discord of the dissenters. He established schools, charities, and spread justice. Also, he besieged Damascus twice and conquered it the third time. He established its regulations, fortified it, built schools and mosques, paved roads, enlarged market places, stopped excessive taxes, punished those who drank wine and delivered the fortified border cities (Baniyas, al-Munaytirah and many others) from the enemy.

[10] He was a great warrior and a good archer. He would march at the front of his fellow warriors praying for martyrdom and invoking the Almighty to resurrect him on the Day of Judgment from the stomachs of beasts or the crops of birds.

[11] He (may Allah have mercy upon him) dedicated an endowment for the sick, the calligraphers, and the teachers of the Ever-glorious Qur'an and the inhabitants of Mecca and Medina. He bestowed large pieces of land on the Arab princes in order that they would not increase the taxes on the pilgrims. Furthermore, he ordered that a wall be built around Medina and that a well be dug in Uhud. He built bridges and dug many canals. Whatever he did in Damascus, he did the same in the other cities that were under his control.

[12] He captured some Frankish princes and defeated the forces of the Romans and the Franks in a place called Harim; a fortress in Aleppo. Furthermore, he managed to control many villages in Antioch.

[13] He conquered the Egyptian cities which were about to be completely invaded by the enemies and he revived the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) again and stopped all heresies.

[14] He was a good calligrapher, a scholar of religion and a follower of the Sunnah. He was persistent in performing congregational prayers, excellent in reciting the Ever-glorious Qur'an, incorruptible and keen to do good deeds. He was provident and used to seek lawful means concerning food and clothes. He was never heard to be obscene whether he was satisfied or angry. He was keen to hear a word uttered for the sake of Allah or some advice that was compatible with the purified Sunnah.

[15] Abu al-Hasan ibn al-Athir said:

I have read about the pre-Islamic period and the history of Islam until our modern times, but I have never known a ruler - except for the Rightly-guided Caliphs and `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz - nobler than the just king Nur ad-Din. He devoted himself to worshipping the Almighty, spreading justice, equipping men for *Jihad*, putting an end to injustice, giving alms and conferring gifts.

[16] In spite of the vastness of his kingdom and treasury, he never ate, drank nor dealt in what he really owned from his share of the booty or the money appointed for the public good of Muslims until he brought the *Faqihs* (jurists) and asked for their religious advice and acted upon their verdict. He never wore any unlawful garment like silk or gold

[17] He prevented drinking or selling wine all over the Islamic lands; it was also not allowed to be shown in the markets. He whipped - according to the Islamic law - any drunkard. and all people were treated equally.

[18] A friend of mine from Damascus who was a foster brother of the daughter of Ma`in ad Din, the wife of Nur ad-Din, and her minister told me, "Whenever Nur ad-Din returned home, he would sit in his favorite place and his wife would serve him. Then, she would leave him and go to her private place. He used to spend time reading the parchments, which the officials sent him, or reading or answering letters. Also, he used to pray for a long time and read parts of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an by day. When night came, he would pray *`Isha'* (Night) prayer and sleep for a while. Then, he would get up in the middle of the night, do ablution and pray until morning. He used to send an amount of money to his wife, but it was not enough because of the high cost of living. Thus, she sent me to ask him for more, but when I told him, he got angry and said, 'From where should I give her? Is she not satisfied with her money? By God, I am not ready to go to Hell-fire in order to meet her demands. If she thinks that the money of the Muslims which I have now is mine, then what a bad wife she is! It is the money of the Muslims assigned for their general benefit and it is allotted for attacking the enemies of Islam; only, I am the caretaker of the money and I will never betray them. I have three shops in Hims and I will bestow them to her.'"

[19] Ibn al-Athir said:

He (may Allah have mercy on him) was a man of good intentions. There was a man on the island who was distinguished by his devotion and piety; Nur ad-Din used to consult him and seek his opinion. One day, the man was informed that Nur ad-Din loved playing polo so much, so he wrote him, "I did not know that you play sport and torture the horses aimlessly and without religious necessity." Thus, Nur ad-Din wrote back, "By Allah, I do not play polo for mere sport and recklessness, but we are in a fortified border city and the enemy is

lurking near and ready to fight us. When the enemy knows that we and the horses are resting, they will attack us from all sides. Also, we do not have the ability to perform *Jihad* by day and night; we must have some rest. If we leave the horses in their stalls, they will grow weaker and not be able to race, turn smoothly or obey the horsemen in the battlefield. By Allah, that is what made me play polo."

Look at this unique ruler who surpassed the sincere worshipers! It is rare to find a person who plays games for the sake of Allah. This proves that he did not do anything aimlessly; this is the merit of great rulers!

[20] It was narrated that he was given a gilded turban from Egypt. He did not bring it to his house and when it was described to him, he paid no attention to it. While they were speaking about it, a poor man came to him and Nur ad-Din ordered it (the turban) to be given to him. Some attendants wondered, "It is not good for such a man. If he is given something else, it will be better for him." But Nur ad-Din said, "Give it to him because I wish to be compensated for it in the Hereafter." The poor man took it and went to Baghdad where he sold it for six or seven hundred dinars.

[21] Ibn al-Athir said:

The prince Baha' ad-Din `Ali ibn as-Sukkari, one of the closest friends of Nur ad-Din, narrated, "One day I was with him in the battlefield in Edessa. The sun was behind us; whenever we marched forward, our shadows appeared in front of us. When we came back our shadows were behind us; thus he raced his horse while looking back and said to me, 'Do you know why I am racing my horse and looking back?' I said, 'No.' He replied, 'This situation is like our (worldly) life; it escapes from those who seek it, and seeks those who escape from it." Here I quote these two lines of poetry:

The sustenance we labor to earn is like
Attendant shadow that follows in your wake;
Sneaking after it, you can never strike,
Turning back on it is, yet, to overtake.

[22] Ibn al-Athir said:

Nur ad-Din (may Allah have mercy upon him) used to pray much by night and supplicate to Allah. Furthermore, he was fond of reading.

[23] He also said:

Nur ad-Din was knowledgeable in Hanafi *Fiqh*. He knew nothing about fanaticism; as tolerance, moderation and justice were his methodology. He learnt *Hadith* and taught it seeking only Allah's reward.

[24] In fact, this austere ruler was a great example for all kings in the past and the future as he adhered to justice and equity. Furthermore, he completely abandoned all forbidden food, drinks, clothing, etc. Many of the kings of his time, like those of the pre-Islamic period, indulged in pleasures paying no attention to performing noble deeds. However, Nur ad-Din adhered to Allah's commands and asked his followers to follow in his footsteps. Undoubtedly, the one who sets a good example will have his reward and the equal reward of those who follow him until the Day of Judgment.

[25] Ibn al-Athir said:

One may ask, "How can a person be described as austere while he has expansive kingdoms and taxes are paid to him?" You can answer saying that Prophet Sulayman (Solomon) though his kingdom was

large, was the most austere person of his time. Another example is our Prophet (peace be upon him) who ruled Hadramaut, Yemen, al-Hijaz and the Arabian Peninsula while he was, in fact, the most austere ruler ever known. Being austere means emptying the heart from love of this worldly life, it does not mean having nothing in one's hand.

[26] Also he said:

Nur ad-Din was the fairest king ever known in his time; he exempted the Levant, the Arabian Peninsula, Mosul and the Egyptian cities from paying taxes. He used to help the oppressed regardless of his status; as all people were equal in front of him. He used to listen to the complaints of the oppressed and investigate these complaints himself. That is why he is still popular until today.

[27] He added:

His justice is manifest in glorifying the acts of the purified *Shari`ah* (Islamic law). He used to say, "We are created and employed for its sake in order to carry out its commandments."

One day, he was playing polo in Damascus when he saw a man talking to another and pointing at him. He sent a servant for the man to know what the problem was. The man told the servant, "I have a dispute over a certain property with the just king. And this is the boy of the judge to summon him." The servant returned to Nur ad-Din and told him about that. Immediately, Nur ad-Din threw the mallet away and left the playground heading for the judge who was - at that time - Kamal ad-Din ash-Shahrazuri. He said to the judge, "I have come here to the court like any other person in order to be tried, so treat me the same as any other person." When the man came and sat beside the defendant (Nur ad-Din), the judge examined the case and Nur ad-Din

was found not guilty. Nur ad-Din addressed the judge and the people in the court, "Do I owe him anything?" They said, "No." He said, "Please bear witness that I bestowed the property that he claimed to be his to him; I knew that it was mine and that he did not have any right to it but I accepted to be sued in order that people would not think that I oppressed him. Since things have now become clear, I bestow it on him."

This is the highest degree of justice and equity. May Allah bless his purified soul which was naturally guided to the right course of action.

[28] He continued:

Another evidence of his justice was that he never punished anyone depending on mere accusation; he used to ask for witnesses and search for evidence incessantly, but once it was found he would punish the guilty according to the appointed penalty prescribed by Islamic law without delay. He abandoned the tortuous means of the governing bodies dominant at his time like excessive punishments and suing people on mere suspicion. This led to the safety of his kingdom in spite of its vastness. Due to justice and applying Islamic law, the crime rate greatly decreased.

[29] He narrated:

Someone whom I trusted told me that one day when Nur ad-Din entered the treasury, he noticed an amount of money. He asked about it. He was told that the judge Kamal ad-Din had sent it and that it was from such and such a place. He said, "This money is not ours; we do not have any money in the place you mentioned." Then, he ordered the money to be sent back to Kamal ad-Din in order that he return it to its real owner. The treasurer sent it to Kamal ad-Din who returned it

again to him and said, "If the king asked again about the money, you should tell him that I said it belongs to him." When Nur ad-Din came again and found that it was still in the treasury he denounced what he had seen and said angrily, "Did I not order that this money must be sent back to its owners?" They told him what Kamal ad-Din had said. Then, he said, "Tell Kamal ad-Din that if he can assume the responsibility of this money, I am not able to assume its responsibility when the Almighty asks me about it on the Day of Judgment."

[30] He added:

The following strange story is a further evidence that his justice influenced others even after his death! One day there was a man who immigrated to Damascus and resided there permanently because of the justice of its ruler, i.e. Nur ad-Din. When Nur ad-Din died, one of his soldiers encroached upon this man. The man went to complain, but nobody took any notice of him. He felt great oppression and came out of the court while asking for help, crying bitterly and tearing his clothes. He cried, "Oh, Nur ad-Din! Were you here now, you would certainly have mercy on us. Where is the time of your justice?" Then he headed for Nur ad-Din's grave along with many people; all of them were crying and shouting.

When Saladin learnt of what had happened, he was advised to deal with this situation wisely so as to protect his people and territory, otherwise chaos would prevail. Saladin summoned that man and returned his right to him, relieved him and gave him a gift. Surprisingly the man cried louder than before. Saladin asked him, "Why are you still crying?!" The man answered, "I cry for a king who - through his justice - influenced others even after his death." Saladin said, "You are right! He is our master and it is he who taught us how to be just."

[31] He went on to say:

Nur ad-Din (may Allah have mercy on him) was the first to build a court of justice. He stayed for a long time in Damascus along with his princes especially Asad ad-Din Shirkuh, the greatest prince and the uncle of Saladin. Shirkuh was the most important man to the extent that he was thought to be a partner in the rule. Those princes became extremely wealthy and they had fabulous amounts of property. They began to encroach upon one another and upon the ordinary people. A huge number of complaints were submitted to Kamal ad-Din who dealt with them all, except those that were against Shirkuh. Thus, he reported what happened to Nur ad-Din who ordered the court to be established as soon as possible. When Asad ad-Din knew that, he gathered all his representatives and said to them, "You should know that Nur ad-Din established this court only for me because I am the only one whom Kamal ad-Din was not able to sue. By Allah, I will crucify the one who will make me go to that court. Go to everyone with whom you have any contention and settle it with him with all possible means even if he asked for all my money." His representatives said, "Had the people known that, they would extort you." He said, "Losing all my wealth is easier than to be seen as a guilty and a haughty oppressor by Nur ad-Din." His representatives left him and carried out what he had ordered; they satisfied all their rivals. When Nur ad-Din completed establishing the court, he attended two days per week with the judge and some *Faqih*s in order to deal with the expected complaints. But to their surprise, no one came to complain, especially against Asad ad-Din. Thus, Nur ad-Din wondered, "No one came to complain against Shirkuh." Kamal ad-Din told him what Asad ad-Din had done. Nur ad-Din prostrated in praise to Allah and said, "Praise be to Allah Who made our people behave justly before being sued before us."

Consider this wonderful example of justice! Consider the greatness of this dignity! Consider the wisdom of this policy! He achieved justice without bloodshed or excessive penalty; his sincerity and good intentions were the reason behind his justice.

[32] He added:

His courage and wisdom were incomparable. At times of war, he was the most courageous and patient. Moreover, his tactics were unique and he was the best to know about the affairs of his troops. In a word, he was a model example.

[33] Ibn al-Athir said:

I have heard many people say that they had never seen a horseman better than him. He was the best polo player of his time. He had the ability to hit the ball, make his horse run, pick up the ball, and throw it again to the farthest point of the playground.

[34] In times of war, he was the first to fight and he used to say, "I fought many battles and wished to be a martyr but I did not obtain my wish." On hearing him, Imam Qutb ad-Din an-Naysaburi told him, "I adjure you in the name of Allah not to risk your life, Islam and the Muslims, for you are their backbone. Were you to be killed in a battle, the Muslims would be murdered and their lands would be invaded." Nur ad-Din replied, "What is all this about? Who am I to be considered so important? There is One Who saved Islam and its lands before me; it is the Almighty and there is no god but He."

[35] He added:

Nur ad-Din (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) was a strategist and he used his skill particularly with the Franks. He conquered most of their lands by making use of military tactics.

His military prowess can be seen in the way he dealt with Malih ibn Liyun, the king of the Armenians. Nur ad-Din infiltrated his court and attracted the king until he became his loyal companion. In this way, Nur ad-Din was able to make use of him in fighting the Franks. Nur ad-Din justified this by saying, "What made me favor him is that his country is fortified with bumpy roads and invincible castles. Furthermore, he may attack us whenever he wishes and endanger the Muslim lands. And if we want to fight him, he will take refuge in his castles and no one will be able to reach him. Thus, I decided to give him some property and money in order to keep him on our side until he accepts our offer and supports us against the Franks.'

When Nur ad-Din died, his successors adopted a different policy. Hence, the successor of the king of the Armenians, al-Mutawalli, conquered a large part of the Muslim lands and fortresses and became a source of great danger.

[36] He continued:

He behaved in an exemplary manner with his soldiers. Whenever one of them was killed, his property was given to his son. If his son was mature enough, he would be allowed to take it over himself. If the son was still too young to take proper care of the property, Nur ad-Din would appoint a wise and responsible man to take care of it until the son was mature and wise enough to take over the responsibility. This encouraged the soldiers and motivated them to fight steadfastly for they felt sure that the lands were theirs and will move to their sons afterwards.

[37] Also, he would write the names and weapons of the soldiers of every prince in a record lest some careless princes failed to offer all what he had during times of war. When he was asked about that, Nur

ad-Din answered, "We are always at war; if the soldiers of every prince were not ready in number and arms, the Muslims would be defeated."

[38] He said:

Nur ad-Din carried out many projects for the benefit of the Muslim lands in order to protect Muslims and their territories. He built walls and established castles in all the territories of the Levant such as Aleppo, Hamah, Hims, Damascus, Barin, Shiraz, Manbij, etc. He spent great amounts of money to do these projects.

[39] Also, he established Shafi`i and Hanafi schools in Aleppo, Hamah, Damascus and other cities. He built mosques throughout the Muslim lands. His mosque in Mosul was an architectural masterpiece. Nur ad-Din entrusted the process of building and supervising this mosque to sheikh `Umar al-Malla who was a very pious man. It was said to Nur ad-Din, "This man is not fit for such kind of work." But he replied, "Were I to give the job to one of my fellow soldiers or writers, he would oppress and commit injustice from time to time. But if I give this job to sheikh `Umar whom I think of highly; he will not wrong anybody and if he does so, he will entails the sins not me." Thus, he gave the others the responsibility of lifting any oppression.

[40] Furthermore, he built one of the most beautiful mosques in Hamah at al-`Asi River. In other cities, he rebuilt the mosques that had been partially destroyed either by earthquakes or for any other reason.

[41] He built a lot of hospitals; the greatest of them was that in Damascus. It gained a lot of wealth and I was told that Nur ad-Din did not make it an endowment for the poor only but rather for all Muslims, rich or poor.

[42] The reason for building this hospital is a wonder according to what I have been told. Nur ad-Din (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) captured one of the great Frankish kings. Later, this king paid a large sum of money to ransom himself. Nur ad-Din consulted his princes and friends but no one agreed to set this king free because of the great danger and threat he posed. However, Nur ad-Din decided to take the ransom after he offered the prayer of *al-Istikharah*[1]. So Nur ad-Din took the ransom and set the king free at night so that his advisers might not oppose him. When the Frankish king reached his country, he died. Nur ad-Din knew of the story and told his advisers what had happened. They were astonished at Allah's clemency on the Muslims since He gave them two loved things; the ransom money and the death of a dangerous enemy. Nur ad-Din decided to spend this money to build this great hospital and decided that none of the advisors and princes would be given it because they opposed it in the beginning.

[43] Ibn al-Athir said.

He built inns along the roadside in order to save the lives and property of travelers. By doing so, he offered a warm comfortable place for travelers in winter.

[44] Also, he built a lot of watch towers along the borders with the Franks and sent efficient soldiers with carrier pigeons in order to send warnings if they saw any of the enemies so as to give the people a chance to take defensive action. Nur ad-Din was so kind to think of protecting the Muslims in such a way.

1 It is a prayer in which the Muslim appeals to Allah to guide him whether to choose or not to choose a certain matter.

[45] He said:

Nur ad-Din built schools and houses for the Sufis throughout his lands and spent a lot of money for that purpose. Moreover, he appointed a certain allowances and used to summon their leaders, honor them, and behave humbly with them. He used to stand up to welcome any of them whenever they appeared and he would hug him, sit with him on a carpet and show great interest in him. He used to do the same with scholars; he would glorify, revere, and respect them. He used to gather them whenever there was something that required research and scholarly opinion. Thus, scholars were keen to come to him frequently from distant places like Khurasan and everywhere.

[46] In summary, his most favored group were the religious scholars whom he used to hold in a high and lofty position to the extent that the princes used to envy them. They used to backbite them in his presence but he would prevent them from doing so. If one of his attendants criticized any of the scholars, he would reproach him saying, "Who is infallible? I think that the perfect person is the one whose sins can be counted."

I was informed that a great prince envied Qutb ad-Din an-Naysaburi, the Shafi`i jurist when Nur ad-Din summoned him from Khurasan and was extremely generous to him. One day this great prince spoke badly of him in the presence of Nur ad-Din, who reproached him saying, "O man, were you right in what you allege about this man? I think he has two great traits which would make up his faults. They are knowledge and piety. But you and others who are like you have double of what you ascribe to him and at the same time you do not have any good trait. Were you more mindful, you would be more inclined to know your own faults. I tolerate your faults while you have no good traits. So should I not tolerate a sin of this man while he had lots of good

traits? By Allah I cannot believe what you say. If you say anything ill again about him or about any other scholar, I will punish you."

[47] He built an institute for learning and teaching *Hadith* in Damascus and allotted much money to it and to those who worked in this project. According to our knowledge, he was the first one to build an institute for *Hadith*.

[48] He also built many orphanages and spent a lot of money on them and their teachers.

[49] He built many mosques and set apart an endowment for them and for the reciters of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an. Indeed, this act was unprecedented. Someone who was expert in the affairs of the Levant told me that the endowments made by Nur ad-Din given in 608 A.H. (1211 A.C.) amounted to nine thousand dinars monthly.

[50] He added:

He was extremely revered and venerated. He was hard at times but never harsh. He was mild but not weak. He was an exceptional example; he imposed the laws on his soldiers and friends to the utmost degree. Furthermore, he enjoined service on everybody regardless of his status.

No prince was able to sit down in his presence without taking permission except Najm ad-Din Ayyub, the father of Saladin Yusuf. The other princes like Asad ad-Din Shirkuh and Majd ad-Din ibn ad-Dayah used to stand until he asked them to sit. Surprisingly, he used to stand up if a Sufi, a jurist, or a poor man entered. As for the latter, he used to bring him closer to his sitting place and treat him kindly. Whenever he gave any of them something from the treasury, he would say, "Those people have their right on the treasury. If they were satisfied with the little we gave, we would be grateful to them."

[51] The meetings he used to hold with others were like those narrated about the Prophet (peace be upon him); they were full of wisdom and were held for the purpose of discussing the Muslims' affairs and religious and scientific matters. They were never obscene. His council was deeply devoted to knowledge, religion, biographies of the righteous people and cross-opinions about *Jihad* and conquering the enemy's lands.

I was told that Ibn `Asakir ad-Dimashqi attended the council of Saladin Yusuf when he was the ruler of Damascus. Ibn `Asakir discovered that the council was full of triviality and misbehavior. He tried to tell Saladin as he used to do so with Nur ad-Din but he did not manage this due to the noise level. He did not go to Saladin's council for a long time. Saladin sent for him several times and when he came, Saladin blamed him for his absence. Ibn `Asakir replied, "I keep myself from such councils because it is much more like that of the commoners; no one heeds the speaker and no one answers a question. In the past we used to attend the council of Nur ad-Din and we were silent and full of dignity. Were he to speak, we would listen attentively and were we to speak, he would be attentive to us." Saladin ordered his friends not to misbehave again in the presence of Ibn `Asakir.

[52] He was extraordinary example in adhering to the fundamentals of the religion. He would never let anyone tamper with anything that was contrary to the correct principles. If anyone dared to commit any illegal act concerning religion, Nur ad-Din would punish him according to his crime. He used to be excessive in this aspect and used to say, "We keep roads safe from thieves and highwaymen while they are less harmful, so will we not preserve religion and secure it? It is the most worthy of keeping safe."

Al-`Imad al-Katib mentioned at the introduction of his book *Al-Barq Ash-Shami* that he came to Damascus in Sha`ban 562 A.H. (1167 A.C.) during the reign of king Nur ad-Din Mahmud ibn Zangi. Al-`Imad mentioned some events that took place during 569 A.H. (1173 A.C.); the year in which Nur ad-Din passed away.

[53] Al-`Imad said:

During this year Nur ad-Din increased the budget of endowments and charities and reconstructed old mosques. Moreover, he eradicated any sign of sin or illegal action and stopped all taxes except *Jizyah* (poll tax) and *Kharaj* (land tax). He ordered me to write pamphlets to be distributed throughout the Muslim countries. I wrote more than one thousand pamphlets regarding the new changes of the taxes. We calculated his alms for the poor during these months and it surprisingly exceeded thirty thousand dinars. He used to bring honest men from every place and ask them about the needy among their people.

[54] If he was given gifts by kings, he would never touch those gifts; he would rather bring them to the judge who would spend them in reconstructing old mosques. When they investigated matters concerning the mosques in Damascus, they found that about one hundred needed a lot of reconstruction work. He ordered to reconstruct them all and dedicated endowments for this purpose. Were I to trace his endowments and alms, I would never finish my book. But it is sufficient to simply look at these buildings that indicate the king's sincerity. He used to hold sessions for preachers and specified a certain place for them in the citadel so that they could preach to the people. The most eminent jurist among them was Qutb ad-Din an-Naysaburi whom Nur ad-Din was very fond of. The kingdom of Nur ad-Din was influential and well-organized

[55] Sheikh Abu al-Barakat al-Hasan ibn Hibat Allah narrated that he attended the council of Nur ad-Din with his uncle Abu al-Qasim (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) in order to hear some useful religious lessons. During the lesson, it was said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) once went out while having a sword around his neck. Nur ad-Din exclaimed and deduced that the Prophet used to do so unlike the habit of the soldiers in those days who used to tie it around their waists. The next day, we passed by the citadel where many people were waiting for the sultan, then we joined them. Nur ad-Din (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) appeared having a sword around his neck so were his soldiers. May Allah have mercy on this king who was keen to follow the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him) precisely.

[56] I was told that he forbade preachers to invoke Allah for him during their sermons on the pulpits mentioning his titles.

[57] His vizier Muwaffaq ad-Din ibn al Qaysarani dreamt that Nur ad-Din was washing his clothes. When he told him, Nur ad-Din thought for a while then ordered that the taxes be nullified and said to him, "This is the interpretation of your dream."

[58] He used to say during his night prayer, "O Allah! Have mercy on the person who takes the tax." When he cancelled these taxes, he asked people to pardon him and addressed them saying, "By Allah we did not take them except for *Jihad*."

[59] Nur ad-Din was unique among the other kings of his time. He used to listen attentively to any advice even if it was said roughly and with sternness. Sharaf ad-Din ibn al-Mustawfi said that the preacher Abu `Uthman ibn Abi Muhammad ibn al-Buhturi al-Wasiti came to

Irbil[1] and gave a sermon there. He traveled to Nur ad-Din Mahmud ibn Zangi in the Levant because of the invaders. Nur ad-Din ordered that he be given an amount of money but he did not accept it and returned it to him.

He recited the following poem about Nur ad-Din:

Oh you fooled, beware the Doomsday,
When the sky is going to sway.
If Nur ad-Din is mentioned, every citizen hails
So Nur ad-Din, don't load the scales.
Though you are the hand that enforces the law,
You are the main encroacher of that law.
What would be your excuse when
You are finally buried in your coffin,
And called to account by angels of the Lord,
To get even with those you oppressed,
No guard then is there to rescue,
In a tight grave that is so narrow,
You would then regret being at the helm,
Knowing that the prospect would be so grim.
After all the glow, you would be pitiable,
In the world of the dead, and miserable
Would you like to have a sound body,
While your heart is barren and unsteady;

1. A city in Iraq.

Totally cut off from the Divine Being,
While other creature enjoy such blessing,
You should grid yourself for the doomsday,
When you may fail to get an alibi.

Indeed, these lines might have been among the main reasons that provoked Nur ad-Din to cancel the taxes and abolish any other wrongdoings which Muslims experienced at that time. May the mercy of Allah be upon the adviser and the advised and whoever longs to follow in his footsteps.

[60] In the following passages I have copied parts from a book entitled *Tarikh Halab* [The History of Aleppo] by scholar Kamal ad-Din Abu al-Qasim `Umar ibn Ahmad ibn Hibat Allah, who said:

I have a parchment written by the handwriting of the vizier Khalid ibn Nasr ibn Saghir al Qaysarani who sent it to Nur ad-Din and the reply of Nur ad-Din was also in the same parchment on the top and between the lines; so I copied all that. Nur ad-Din asked ibn al-Qaysarani to send him a copy of what the preachers used to invoke or ask Allah for him lest he should be described by something that was not true, and to prevent lies from being told as well as preventing him from being known for something that he did not do. The copy of Khalid reads, "May Allah raise the rank of our king both in this life and in the Hereafter. And let his dreams and his wishes both come true for himself and his posterity. May Allah, out of His Graces and Bounties, seal all his works with good deeds and guide him to the best both in this life and the Hereafter by His Grace and Glory. May Allah be pleased with him and his parents and may He facilitate the means for his pleasure. Allah is the Ever Omnipotent. I saw that the preacher should supplicate Allah to be pleased with the sultan by saying, 'O

Allah! Amend Your Servant who badly needs Your Mercy, who is submissive to Your Glory, who is seeking refuge in Your Omnipotence, who is striving in Your Way and who adheres to fight the enemies of Your Religion; Abu al-Qasim Mahmud ibn Zangi ibn Aq Sunqur, the supporter of the Abbasid Caliph in Baghdad."

Nur ad Din replied at the top of the parchment saying, "What I meant was that no lies should be told on the pulpit. I am not happy when I am described with something I do not do. What has been written is good; so inscribe it in order to send it throughout our lands." Then, Nur ad-Din added at the end of the letter, "We should begin our supplication with, 'O Allah! Show him the right, please him, render him victorious and help him achieve his aims.'"

[61] My father told me that a prosperous merchant came to Aleppo during the reign of Nur ad-Din. This merchant died there leaving a young boy and a large amount of wealth. Some people of Aleppo wrote to Nur ad-Din that a rich man had died leaving a ten-year-boy and more than twenty thousand dinars. They suggested that it would be better to keep his money in the treasury until the boy grows up and then some of it would be given to him and the rest would go to the treasury. Nur ad-Din replied, 'May Allah have mercy on the deceased; may Allah raise the young boy; may Allah curse the money and may Allah damn those who sought the boy's property."

[62] `Umar ibn Sunqur `Atiq Shaz Bakht told me, "I have heard at-Tawashi Bakht, the servant, saying, 'One day, I and Sunqurja were standing beside Nur ad-Din after he had offered the *Maghrib* Prayer. He sat thinking deeply and digging his finger in the dust. We were amazed at this contemplation and wondered about what occupied his concern: his family or his debts? It seemed that he noticed our bewilderedness, so he raised his head and said: What are you saying?

We said: We are amazed at our king's deep contemplation and we said that he might be thinking about his family or himself. He replied: By Allah I am thinking of a ruler whom I appointed but he was not just with the Muslims and he oppresses the Muslims who are my friends and assistants. I fear that Allah will question me about it. By Allah! If you see any injustice, you must tell me as fast as you can in order to put an end to it, otherwise your salaries would be ill-gotten."

[63] I[1] heard the chief judge Baha' ad-Din Abu al Mahasin Yusuf ibn Rafi` ibn Tamim saying, "Nur ad-Din used to send a message to sheikh `Umar al-Malla every Ramadan asking for something to break his fast. Thus, `Umar used to send him back cases of crumbs and small dry pieces of bread and other things. Nur ad-Din used to eat this during the *Adhan* (call) of the *Maghrib* Prayer every day in Ramadan. Moreover, he used to eat from the meals of sheikh `Umar al-Malla whenever he came to Mosul."

[64] When Nur ad-Din conquered Mosul, he ordered the ruler of the city Kamashtakin to follow nothing but the orders of Islamic *Shari`ah* whenever the judge ordered him; furthermore, the judge himself and all his representatives should not make any decision before consulting sheikh `Umar al-Malla. They told Kamashtakin that the number of immoral people had increased and therefore corruption had spread and they would never stop except by meting out severe punishments. They asked him to send a message to Nur ad-Din telling him about that. He replied, "I never dare do that." Hence, they told sheikh `Umar al-Malla and asked him to write to Nur ad-Din. Sheikh `Umar wrote to Nur ad-Din, "Dissoluteness, corruption and highway rubbery have increased and they require severe punishments. If someone's possessions are stolen in the desert, from where can he get a witness?"

1. Kamal ad-Din Abu al-Qasim.

Nur ad Din answered him, "Allah, Glory be to Him, created people and knows what is best for them; He enacted a law which is for their benefit. People's welfare is achieved perfectly by adopting Islamic law. If there was more benefit in something other than Islamic law, Allah would have prescribed it. So, we are in no need of any other law."

Then, sheikh `Umar al-Malla gathered the people of Mosul, read the message of Nur ad-Din aloud and commented, "Look at the message of the ascetic to the king and that of the king to the ascetic!"

[65] I[1] quoted some lines from Abu al-Fath Banjah al-Ashtari who was one of those who came to Damascus and wrote a brief biography about Nur ad-Din. He said, "Nur ad-Din used to attend four or five days a week in the courthouse in order to investigate the people's problems to sort them out. He did not do that in order to have extra salary. Rather, he only sought Allah's Pleasure and Reward; he longed to be close to Allah in the Hereafter. He used to bring the scholars and the jurists along with him. He did not keep a servant or a doorman so that any person could reach him at any time; the weak and the strong, and the poor and the rich. He would speak mildly to them. He used to bring an old woman who was not able to reach her opponent or to speak to him. He would take her right owing to Nur ad-Din's justice and her rival would keep silent due to his fear of Nur ad-Din's justice. By doing so, the right would become obvious and Allah let Nur ad-Din speak with all that coincided with Islamic *Shari`ah*. He used to ask scholars and jurists about ambiguous problems and his sessions were dedicated to the Islamic *Shari`ah*."

1 Kamal ad-Din Abu al-Qasim.

[66] He added:

He was completely concerned about the public interests of the people and he always considered their living conditions and showed mercy to them. His thoughts were directed to showing the excellent aspects of Islam and setting up the infrastructure of an Islamic state like building schools, houses for Sufis and mosques. The Levant was free from knowledge and scholars, but in Nur ad-Din's time it became the home of scholars, jurists, and Sufis. Nur ad-Din used to keep his promises, forgive the wrongdoers and had never been hesitant.

[67] His sessions were unlike those of other kings. They were free from debauchery, cursing, backbiting, defamation and speaking ill of people. He did not gain any money by force and never accepted to give even one dirham from the treasury without a legitimate reason.

[68] Kamal ad-Din continued:

Some trustworthy people said that Nur ad-Din used to spend nights praying and invoking earnestly. He used to perform the five daily prayers in absolute humility.

[69] Some trustworthy Sufis who visited Jerusalem said that the disbelievers (the Franks) said, "Ibn al-Qasim (Nur ad-Din) is close to Allah. He did not win battles because of a huge number of soldiers and warriors, but with supplication and prayer at night. He used to pray at night and raise his hands high invoking Allah. Thus, Allah answers him and gives him whatever he asks."

[70] He added:

Sheikh Dawud al-Maqdisi stated, "While we were at the Court of Justice in Rabi` al-Awwal 558 A.H. (1163 A.C.), a man claimed that the father of king Nur ad-Din took some money from him illegally.

The man asked Nur ad-Din to return this money to him. Nur ad-Din replied, 'I do not know anything about that. If you have any evidence or witness who can support you, you can produce it and I will give you back my share because I am not the only heir.' The man went to seek his witness. I thought, 'This is pure justice indeed!'"

[71] He continued:

Once an ascetic with traits of goodness and piety came to him. I asked about that ascetic and they told me that he was the brother of Abu al-Bayan. Before his death, Abu al-Bayan was entrusted with a deposit. The depositer claimed that the ascetic knew about the deposit and wanted it back. The ascetic refused to admit it. Judge Kamal ad-Din made him swear that he did not have any idea about the deposit. Thus, the ascetic swore. Hereupon, the depositor began to curse, slander and abuse the ascetic saying, "He is a liar." The ascetic went to king Nur ad-Din complaining about the man. He asked the king to summon him and stop him from slandering him. Nur ad-Din addressed the ascetic, "Does not Allah say in His Book, ﴾*And when the ignorant address them (with bad words), they reply back with mild words of gentleness*﴿[1]? If he is an ignorant person and behaves like that, you should not do like him, you should not return the offence with another offense, but you should return the offence with charity." I realized, "What king Nur ad-Din said is right; he might have read it in the books of the interpretation of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an or Allah guided him to it."

[72] He added:

A young boy came weeping to king Nur ad-Din and told him that his father had been imprisoned because he did not pay the rent of his room which belonged to the state's endowments. Then, Nur ad-Din

1. Al-Furqan 63.

asked about this boy and his father. They told him that the boy was the son of sheikh Abu Sa`d who was ascetic and was unable to pay the rent of his room. The man in charge of the endowments had imprisoned him because he did not pay the rent for a full year. King Nur ad-Din asked, "How much is the rent for a year?" They replied, "One hundred and fifty." Then, Nur ad-Din said, "We will give him this amount annually in order to be able to pay the rent of the room." Moreover, he ordered to release the man. The people were very pleased for this incident and responded as if they were in trouble and then helped by the king.

[73] In another place of his book, Kamal ad-Din said:

Iftikhar ad-Din `Abd al-Muttalib al-Hashimi told me, "Taj ad-Din Abd al-Ghafur ibn Luqman al-Kurdari, the judge of Aleppo, had a servant boy called Suwayd who was in charge of bringing rivals to the judge's session. A merchant came to the judge and sued Nur ad-Din. Al-Kurdari ordered Suwayd to summon the king.

Nur ad-Din was in the hippodrome and Suwayd came to its gate where Isma`il al-Khazindar received him. Suwayd told Isma`il the story and the reason of his visit and said, 'Judge Taj ad-Din sent me to summon the king.' Thereupon, Isma`il made fun of him and went to Nur ad-Din laughing while he spoke, 'May my king stand up?' Nur ad-Din asked, 'Where to?' Isma`il said, 'The servant boy of Taj ad-Din came to summon you.' Nur ad-Din told him not to make fun and said, 'Do you mock me because I am summoned to the courthouse. I have to hear and obey. Allah, the Almighty, says, ﴿*The only saying of the faithful believers, when they are called to Allah (His Words, the Qur'an) and His Messenger (peace be upon him), to judge between them, is that they say: We hear and we obey.*﴾[1]

1. An-Nur: 51.

Nur ad-Din stood up quickly and rode his horse until he reached the entrance of the city. He summoned Suwayd and said to him, 'Go to the judge and tell him that I have come here for the Sake of Allah; but I could not reach the place of his court because I had to cross these narrow streets which are full of mud. This is my representative who will go to the court. If there is a must to swear before the judge, I will come, Allah willing.' Then his representative came and attended the session but Nur ad-Din had to swear; so, al-Kurdari summoned him again. When Nur-ad-Din found that he had to come to the court in spite of all the difficulties of the road, he summoned the merchant and settled the problem with him.

[74] He added:

I heard the chief judge Baha' ad-Din saying, "Sultan Saladin narrated to me that king Nur ad-Din sent him with a message to his uncle Asad ad-Din Shirkuh who was Nur ad-Din's best advisor to tell him that he was considering to cancel taxes and guarantees. When Asad ad-Din received the message he told Saladin to return to Nur ad-Din with this reply, 'O king, if you do that, you will not be able to pay the soldier's salaries. You are always in urgent need of them.' Saladin said to his uncle, 'King Nur ad-Din is convinced to do that. I ask you to help him achieve his goal.' As a result, Asad ad-Din shouted at Saladin saying, 'Go to him and tell him what I have told you.' Then Saladin returned to Nur ad-Din and told him what his uncle had said! Nur ad-Din replied, 'Go to him and tell him, 'Were we to fund our conquests from these resources, we would stop.' Saladin I returned to Asad ad-Din and told him the message. Asad ad-Din sent a message to Nur ad-Din again with this reply, "Were they (the enemies) to leave you and you were to stop your conquests, it would be better.' Upon this, Saladin begged him again not to dissuade him

from doing so, but he shouted at him saying, 'Go to him and tell him what I said.' Thus, Saladin returned to Nur ad-Din and told him. King Nur ad-Din ceased doing so for a period of time, then he carried out what he had intended to do."

[75] He also said:

I heard Khalifah ibn Sulayman saying, "I heard my father saying, When Nur ad-Din was defeated in al-Baqi`ah, al-Burhan al-Balkhi said: How can you win while your soldiers are drunk and there are musical instruments and drums? Never, Never!

When Nur ad-Din heard that, he stood up and took his clothes off and pledged to Allah to repent and began by cancelling the taxes."

Chapter II

Nur ad-Din (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) was eulogized in many poetic works. Indeed, his qualities were indescribable. During his time there were two famous poets: Abu `Abdullah ibn Nasr ibn Saghir and Abu al-Hasan Ahmad ibn Munir. They composed wonderful lines about him.

I read in the collection of Muhammad ibn Nasr al-Qaysarani the following lines:

He fought both enemies through his life;
His whims and the atheists in a mighty strife,
A king who made the people adhere

To the straight-line that is clear,
Guiding all kings to justice and fairness,
Following the righteous caliphs' steps,
Distributing everything you own,
Even piety on the pious.
In another place in his collection, he said:
The sun has shone with smiling beam,
As if they were lineaments of the great Nur ad-Din,
The king who sold his soul to the Lord,
And material pleasures are to him abhorred,
People's invocations do guard his soul,
Surely invocation is a mighty patrol,
He tamed ferocious calamities; so wild,
And turned the world's heart mild,
Returning the light of the truth to niche,
He put right the scales of justice.

He died on 11th Shawwal 569 A.H. (1173 A.C.) and was buried in Damascus citadel. Then he was taken to his dome at his school near al-Khawwasin

This is a general review about Nur ad-Din. Now, we are going to discuss his accounts classified and explained by his ancestors. Furthermore, we will mention briefly some events that took place during their lifetimes, by Allah's Will.

Chapter III

The Parentage of the House of Atabeg

The parentage of the house of Atabeg is Qasim ad-Dawlah Aq Sunqur; the grandfather of Nur ad-Din. We will explain in detail some events which took place during his lifetime and then relate the story of his son Zangi and Zangi's son; Mahmud ibn Zangi. Afterwards, we will examine the Ayyubid dynasty of Saladin and some relevant events.

[**76**] Aq Sunqur was a Turk of the sultan Rukn ad-Din Malikshah ibn Alb Arslan. Sultan Malikshah was one of the Seljuk kings who controlled Iraq after the fall of the Buwayhid dynasty. Qasim ad Dawlah was one of the sultans' friends and was of the same age. He was brought up with him since childhood and continued with him until he became mature. When Malikshah became a king after the death of his father, he chose Qasim ad-Dawlah to be his most important prince and dearest confidant and depended on him.

Then when the companions of the king feared Qasim's increasing power, they advised Malikshah to grant him the castle of Aleppo, Hamah, Manbij, al-Ladhiqiyyah and some other cities as fiefs and the king agreed. These places remained under Qasim's control until he was murdered in 487 A.H. (1094 A.C.).

When Qasim ad-Dawlah settled in the Levant, his efficiency, power and solemnity became manifest. When sultan Malikshah died,

Qasim marched with an army to Tikrit and captured it. In 481 A.H. (1088 A.C.), Qasim ad-Dawlah headed for Shayzar and controlled it, after which he returned to Aleppo. In 483 A.H. (1090 A.C.), Qasim ad-Dawlah and Bazzan united and conquered Hims. In 484 A.H. (1091 A.C.), Qasim annexed the fortress of Famyah and ar-Rahbah to his lands.

[77] Sultan Malikshah did a lot of good actions and he died in 485 A.H. (1092 A.C.). After his death, his two sons; Takyaruq and Muhammad fought. There was a state of war for more than twelve years between them until Takyaruq died and Muhammad became the sultan.

Previously, sultan Malikshah granted his brother, Taj ad-Dawlah, Damascus and the neighboring cities like Tiberias and Jerusalem as fiefs. However, when he died, Taj ad-Dawlah aspired to be the sultan. Thus, a series of wars took place; the army of Qasim ad-Dawlah was defeated and he himself was captured and killed by Taj ad-Dawlah.

[78] Qasim ad-Dawlah was a good ruler. His people enjoyed equity, general decrease of prices, and a state of peace.

He stipulated on his people that whenever a caravan, containing little or much, was stolen or even one person was kidnapped near any village, the inhabitants of that village should pay the value of the stolen money. Hence, travelers used to leave their luggage when they arrived in his state and would sleep while the people of that place were guarding them till they departed. The roads were kept safe and the travelers used to eulogize him continually.

A Brief Account of Zangi, the Father of Nur ad-Din

[79] When Qasim ad-Dawlah Aq Sunqur was killed, he left only one son, `Imad ad-Din Zangi - the father of Nur ad-Din. At that time, `Imad ad-Din was ten years old. His father's assistants and soldiers supported and united with him.

Prince Karbuqa left the prison after Taj ad-Dawlah was killed in 487 A.H. (1094 A.C.) and headed to Harran with a large number of soldiers and managed to conquer it. He also headed to Nasibayn and conquered it as well. Then he headed to Mosul and deposed `Ali ibn Sharaf ad Dawlah al `Aqili. Furthermore, he managed to conquer Mardin.

He grew powerful while he was under the leadership of Rukn ad Dawlah Takyaruq. When he controlled these cities, he summoned the soldiers of Qasim ad-Dawlah Aq Sunqur and ordered them to bring `Imad ad-Din Zangi and said, "He (`Imad ad-Din) is my nephew and I am the person who is most responsible to raise him." They brought him and Karbuqa granted them many lands as fiefs. Furthermore, Karbuqa made use of their efforts during times of war and they were unbelievably brave.

[80] Karbuqa remained the ruler until he died in 494 A.H. (1101 A.C.). Musa at-Turkmani ruled for a short period of time after him before he was killed. Mosul was ruled by Shams ad-Dawlah Jakarmash who was also one of the companions of sultan Malikshah.

Jakarmash raised `Imad ad-Din Zangi up and brought him close to him, loved him and adopted him in recognition of his father's favor and status. `Imad ad-Din stayed with him until he was killed in 500 A.H. (1106 A.C.). Therefore, no wonder that Zangi was grateful to Jakarmash when the former ruled Mosul and many other places; Zangi took Nasir ad-Din Kuri, the son of Jakarmash, favored him, granted him large fiefs, made him honorable and was related to him by marriage. Mosul was ruled after Jakarmash by Jawli Saqa'uh. `Imad ad-Din communicated with him after being very wealthy and valiant. He continued to support Jawli until he disobeyed sultan Muhammad. Jawli crossed to the Levant in order to control it and to depose its king, Fakhr ad-Din Radwan. Thus, the sultan sent prince Mawdud to Mosul and gave it to him as a fief in 502 A.H. (1108 A.C.). Then, Zangi and some other princes ceased to support Jawli.

[81] When Mawdud settled in Mosul, Zangi communicated with him. He was very generous to Zangi; thus, Zangi fought with him. Mawdud went to the invaders in the Levant and conquered some fortresses belonging to the Franks and killed the people residing there. Then, he went to Edessa[1] and besieged it but he did not conquer it. After that he crossed the Euphrates in order to besiege the hill of Bashir[2]. He besieged it for forty-five days then he marched to Ma`arrat an-Nu`man and besieged it too. Tughtikin, the ruler of Damascus came to him; then both of them went to Tiberias and besieged it. Zangi proved to be incredibly brave.

[82] The two parties, the soldiers of Mawdud and the Franks, engaged in a fierce battle. The Franks were defeated and prince

1. A city in Turkey.
2. A citadel north of Aleppo.

Mawdud allowed the troops to return home on condition that they should come again in the spring. When his soldiers left, he went to Damascus and stayed there. One day while he was going out from the Friday prayer, someone rushed and stabbed him while he was walking with Tughtikin. Prince Mawdud, who was fasting, received four fatal wounds. They took him to the house of Tughtikin who tried to make him break his fast but he refused and said. "I wish to meet Allah while I am fasting. Undoubtedly, I will die whether fasting or not." He died at the end of that day (may Allah have mercy upon him). It was said that al-Batiniyyah[1] in the Levant feared him so they assassinated him. Also, it was said that Tughtikin feared him, so he paid a mercenary to kill him. Mawdud was just and famous.

[83] Ibn al-Athir said:

My father (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) said to me, "The Frankish king sent a message to Tughtikin in which he said, 'The nation that kills its head in its best day (feast) at its most sacred place (the mosque), Allah will undoubtedly root it out.'"

[84] When prince Mawdud was killed, the sultan granted Mosul as a fief to prince Habbush and sent his son with the prince to that place. He equipped Aq al-Bursuqi with an army in order to fight the Franks and sent a message to the soldiers of Mosul that they should fight with him. They went with him and `Imad ad-Din was among them. `Imad ad-Din was known among the soldiers as the Levantine Zangi.

Al-Bursuqi went to Edessa with fifteen thousand warriors. He besieged it and killed the Franks and the Armenians who were there. When his supplies decreased, he left for Sumaysat, which was in the

1. It is a disbelieving group aiming at killing the scholars and the pious among the rulers. It is also called al-Hashshashin.

hands of the Franks. He controlled it and demolished Suruj and Shabakhtan. Zangi fought bravely and fiercely in all these battles. When the troops returned, they told stories about his bravery. Al-Bursuqi returned to Baghdad and Zangi stayed in Mosul with king Mas`ud and prince Habbush till 524 A.H. (1130 A.C.). During this period, Zangi attained a high status.

Chapter IV

Nur ad Din Mahmud ibn Zangi was born in 511 A.H. (1117 A.C.).

[85] In this year, Sinjar[1] was flooded and a lot of people perished. One of the wonders was that the flood carried a baby in his cradle. The cradle hung on a tree until the water receded and the baby was saved while clever swimmers drowned.

[86] Also, in this year a violent earthquake struck Irbil and some near places.

[87] In this year on 24th of Dhu al-Hijjah, sultan Muhammad ibn Malikshah died at the age of thirty-seven years, four months and six days. The first time he was eulogized in Friday sermons was in Dhu al-Hijjah 492 A.H. (1099 A.C.) in Baghdad. His kingdom, however, was not completely settled and that was why the preachers did not continually pray for him. He met many hardships till his brother, Takyaruq, died. It was not until that time that he became the sole sultan and people obeyed him. He remained a sultan after his brother's death for twelve years and six months.

1. It is a city near Mosul.

[88] He was just, famous, and courageous. He cancelled the taxes throughout his kingdom. It was a part of his justice that he bought some Mamelukes from some merchants and ordered the ruler of Khuzestan to pay their prices to the slave trader. The ruler paid some and put off paying the rest. Thus, the merchant came to the session of the court and stood in the doorway from which the sultan would pass and called for his help. The sultan sent a message to know what the matter was. The janitor came back and told the sultan what had happened to that merchant. The sultan was extremely annoyed and ordered the ruler of Khuzestan to be brought and obliged him to pay the merchant. He regretted his previous absence from the court session and said, "I regret not coming to the court session. Had I done it, everyone would have imitated me and no one would have been accused of wrongdoing."

[89] Ibn al-Athir said:

This merit was one of Allah's Favors to the Atabeg's; king Nur ad-Din Mahmud ibn Zangi did what sultan Muhammad neglected to do and regretted as was mentioned previously. When the princes and other people knew that the sultan was himself just, liked justice, hated oppression, and severely punished the oppressors, they followed in his footsteps. Thus, the people felt secure and justice prevailed.

[90] After sultan Muhammad died, his son Mahmud ruled. Mahmud was fourteen years old when he became the sultan. A war took place between him and his uncle Sinjar in which he was defeated. Finally, he came back to his uncle who accepted his return with no conditions and was very generous to him.

Chapter V

[91] When Mahmud became sultan, he appointed his brother Mas`ud as a ruler over Mosul and sent prince Habbush with him. Mas`ud remained obedient to his brother until 514 A.H. (1120 A.C.); then he thought to separate from him and became the sultan. He rebelled and was known as a sultan. Zangi thought that they should obey the sultan and never quarrel over that matter. Furthermore, he warned them against rebellion but they refused to listen. The armies of the two brothers fought; the army of Mas`ud was defeated and a group of princes and lords were captured.

[92] Mas`ud and prince Habbush sought protection and the sultan conferred his protection on them but in exchange for Mosul which had been granted to Aq al-Bursuqi with its vicinity like aj-Jazirah, Sinjar and Nasibayn in Safar 515 A.H. (1121 A.C.). He sent al-Bursuqi to it and ordered him to protect `Imad ad-Din Zangi and to follow his opinion. Al-Bursuqi did so because he knew the wisdom and bravery of Zangi and also the noble status of his father.

[93] In 520 A.H. (1126 A.C.), Aq Sunqur al-Bursuqi was murdered in the old mosque of Mosul after the Friday prayer. Ten persons from al-Batiniyyah attacked him; he managed to kill three of them but he was killed.

He was just, well-mannered and sociable. He used to pray a lot every night. He never used to accept help in his ablution for prayer. The sultan granted `Izz ad-Din Mas`ud, the son of Aq al-Bursuqi, all

that was under the reign of his father, like Mosul, aj-Jazirah, Aleppo, Hamah and the island of Ibn `Umar. `Izz ad-Din was a young man who was endowed with sensibility. He ran the affairs of his state efficiently and he died after a short period in 521 A.H. (1127 A.C.). His young brother ruled after him and prince Jawli, who was one of their father s Turkish Mamelukes, managed to run the affairs of the kingdom during the time of the two brothers.

Chapter VI

The Rule of Zangi over Mosul and Other Places That Were under Al-Bursuqi

[94] When `Izz ad-Din al-Bursuqi died, his young brother succeeded him and Jawli took care of him. He sent a message to sultan Mahmud asking him to acknowledge him as ruler. The appointed men, who were asked to carry this message, were judge Baha' ad-Din Abu al-Hasan `Ali ibn ash-Shahrazuri and Saladin Muhammad al-Yaghbisani. They arrived in Baghdad in order to deliver this message to the sultan. They used to fear Jawli and were never satisfied with his rule or being subjects in his state.

They said to the doorman, "You and the sultan knew that aj-Jazirah and the Levant were invaded by the Franks and that they grow more powerful everyday. Al-Bursuqi used to challenge and vanquish them but since his murder they have grown greedy. His son is still a young boy. There must be a brave and valiant man who can defend Islam and its lands. We have told you this, so we will not feel

guilty if the Muslims get weaker or Islam is alienated. Another reason why we have told you this is that the sultan would not blame us."

The doorman told the sultan who admired their words, and said, "Who do you think is most fit for this place?"

They recommended some people like `Imad ad-Din Zangi, whom they eulogized greatly. The sultan agreed to appoint him because of his valiance and competence. After that `Imad ad-Din left Baghdad and headed for Mosul. Jawli met him and returned with him as one of his assistants. Zangi sent him to ar-Rahbah and its surroundings while he stayed in Mosul. He began to change and improve the conditions there.

[95] At that time, the lands of the Franks increased astonishingly and their number of soldiers also increased rapidly. Their prestige and power became great. They began to invade the Muslim lands and the Muslims were not able to defend their lands. The Frankish attacks against the Muslims were successive and merciless. They tortured the Muslims and their kingdom expanded from Mardin to al-`Arish in Egypt. All these areas came under their power except Aleppo, Hamah, Hims and Damascus. Their camps expanded from Bakr to Amid and from aj-Jazirah to Nasibayn and Ra's al-`Ayn. They tortured the people of ar-Raqqah and Harran. They destroyed the roads to Damascus except the ones leading to ar-Rahbah and al-Barr. They imposed tribute and land taxes on all the surrounding areas in order not to invade them.

Moreover, they went to Damascus and summoned the slaves who were captured from the Romans and the Armenians and other Christian countries and gave them the choice between going back home or staying with their masters. They left those who chose to stay with their masters and returned those who chose to go home.

Furthermore, they took half of Aleppo's municipalities. The rest of the Levant was degraded more and more.

Then Allah decreed that `Imad ad-Din Zangi should rule so as to save the Muslims. `Imad ad-Din invaded the Frankish lands, avenged the Muslims, and recaptured many fortresses. His conquest, as well as that of his son, will be explained in detail later.

Chapter VII

[96] Zangi (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) proceeded to restore the invaded Muslim lands. He conquered the island of ibn `Umar and Irbil in Ramadan 522 A.H. (1128 A.C.). He returned to Mosul and headed for Sinjar on Jumada al-Ula 523 A.H. (1129 A.C.) and conquered it. Then he went to al-Khabur and ar-Rahbah and conquered them as well. After that he conquered Nasibayn and went to Harran.

Edessa, Suruj and other municipalities of aj-Jazirah had been occupied by the Franks. The people of Harran were severely oppressed by the Franks and they asked Zangi to help them and urged him to set their lands free. He responded to them and made a short truce with the Franks in that place in order to restore other cities in the Levant. His main aim was to cross the Euphrates and conquer Aleppo and other cities.

Once he crossed the Euphrates, he besieged Aleppo and conquered it. He reorganized everything there, then he headed for Hamah and conquered it too. After that he headed for Hims and captured its ruler before he conquered it in 523 A.H (1129 A.C.).

In 524 A.H. (1130 A.C.), the ruler of Amid collaborated with the ruler of Kayfa fortress and some other rulers and gathered about twenty thousand soldiers. They intended to fight Zangi but he vanquished them all. `Imad ad-Din decided to complete his *Jihad*, so he fought the people of the fortress of Atharib that was the most dangerous place for the people of Aleppo. The Franks prepared for a great battle against him but he vanquished them and made a historic victory. It was said that the bones of the dead soldiers remained for a long period in the battlefield. He then returned to the fortress and seized it.

Afterwards, he marched to the fortress of Harim, but the Frankish survivors of the battle sent a message calling for a peace treaty in return for paying fifty percent of Harim's revenues. Zangi agreed because most of his soldiers were either wounded or killed. So he seized the chance of peace in order to let his troops rest. The Muslims in the Levant were also sure of an imminent victory and felt safe. Glad tidings were spread throughout the territories. After that Zangi conquered Hamah in 524 A.H. (1130 A.C.).

Chapter VIII

Zangi's Jihad Against the Franks

[97] In 532 A.H. (1137 A.C.), the Roman king marched with a great army from Constantinople. He headed to the Levant and caused great terror. Zangi was busy conquering the above-mentioned fortresses and was not able to leave Mosul. The Roman king began with Baza`ah and besieged it. He conquered it and killed many warriors and enslaved their posterity in Sha`ban. Then he headed for

Shayzar that was a fortress near to Hamah. He besieged it in the middle of Sha`ban and set up about eighteen catapults. Its ruler, Abu al-`Askir Sultan ibn Munqidh, sent a message to Zangi asking for help.

Zangi encamped in Hamah and used to go to Shayzar everyday with his soldiers in order to make the Roman king see them. Furthermore, he sent battalions to kidnap any Roman soldiers who tried to loot.

The Romans and the Franks encamped in the east of Shayzar. Zangi delegated an envoy saying to them, "You have fortified yourselves with those mountains; were you brave, you would go to the desert to fight. If you win, you will hold Shayzar and many other cities; if I win, I will relieve the Muslims from your evils." He was not, by any means, able to overcome them because of their mighty power. He told them so only to frighten them. The Franks made light of him and advised the Roman king to confront him, but the king told them, "Do you think that those are his only soldiers while having all these lands? He is only leering you with this small number of soldiers in order that you become greedy and confront him in the desert. If you do so you will see forces swarming on you before which you will stand helpless."

During that time, Atabeg Zangi was communicating with the Franks of the Levant warning them about the Roman king. He told them that if the Roman king overtook any fortress, he would take the rest of the fortresses which were already in the hands of the Franks. He also used to befool the Roman king by making him think that the Franks were on his side. Thus, both the Romans and the Franks lost confidence in each other. Hence, the Roman king withdrew in Ramadan after he had stayed there for twenty-four days. He left the petards and all their equipment. Zangi followed their troops and captured some soldiers at the rear of the army. He gained enormous spoils and killed and captured many of them.

Chapter IX

[98] Atabeg, the martyr, headed toward the Frankish countries and invaded some of them in 534 A.H. (1139 A.C.). The Frankish kings united and marched their troops to confront him. The confrontation took place near the fortress of Barin, which was, at that time, under the control of the Franks. The two armies fought fiercely and steadfastly in an unprecedented way. The Muslims were victorious owing to Allah's Grace. The Frankish kings fled along with their horsemen and entered the fortress of Barin accompanied by the king of Jerusalem. They sought refuge in that fortress because it was the nearest to them. They handed in their ammunition and equipment and many of their soldiers were wounded. The martyr headed for the fortress of Barin and besieged it. They asked him for security if they give up the fortress, but Atabeg disagreed.

It was reported that some coastal Franks sent for the Romans and the Franks seeking their help and telling them what had happened to their kings. The Romans and the Franks decided to send reinforcements. At the same time, the besieged soldiers did not know anything about their plans. Those who were besieged repeated their offer of a ceasefire; Zangi agreed this time and took control of the fortress. While they were departing, they were met by Christian reinforcements. The reinforcements asked them about what had happened and they replied that they gave over the fortress to the Muslims. The Christians blamed them and asked them, "Were you not able to keep the fortress for two days?" They swore that they had no idea about their arrival since the beginning of the siege. They added,

"When we received no news, we thought that you had ignored us. We saved ourselves from death by giving over the fortress."

Ibn al-Athir commented:

The fortress of Barin was one of the most dangerous Frankish fortresses against the Muslims. The dwellers of this fortress plundered whatever was in the area that lies between Hamah and Aleppo and caused mischief throughout the whole area. Allah employed Atabeg to remove this great harm.

[99] Ibn al-Athir said:

When the Romans and the Franks reached the Levant they tried to gain any moral score; thus, they fought Aleppo and besieged it. Atabeg preferred not to sacrifice the Muslim soldiers through confronting these armies because of their great numbers. He withdrew and encamped near them in order to prevent supplies from reaching them and to protect the outskirts of the city from the enemy and from being raided.

He commissioned judge Kamal ad-Din ash-Shahrazuri to sultan Mas`ud to inform him about the sad affairs in the Muslim countries and to tell him about their urgent need for help. Kamal ad-Din said to him, "I fear that the sultan may take this as a pretext for taking the country from us. His soldiers may settle and occupy it." But Atabeg said to him, 'The enemy coveted these Islamic lands; if they take Aleppo, there will be no Islam in the Levant. However, the Muslims are worthier of it, if they covet it."

Ash-Shahrazuri said, "When I arrived in Baghdad and delivered the message to the sultan, he promised to send soldiers but he did not lift a finger. Atabeg sent me many messages urging me to send soldiers as fast as possible. I kept asking but got nothing except promises. When I became sure that the sultan could not really care

about this dangerous matter, I summoned a jurist who was the legal representative of the sultan and said to him, 'Take these dinars and distribute them among some of the commoners of Baghdad and non-Arabs. On the Friday sermon, you and those hired agitators should rise and ask for help saying all in one voice: O Islam! You, with them, will go out of the mosque and head for the palace of the sultan asking for help.' Also, I sent some hired persons to the sultan's mosque to do the same. On Friday the preacher ascended the pulpit then this jurist stood up, tore his clothes and threw his turban away. He began to cry loudly, and the hired commoners did the same. Then, everybody in the mosque began to cry. All the people who were in the mosque headed toward the palace of the sultan, along with those who were in the sultan's mosque. The inhabitants of Baghdad and the soldiers gathered at the palace of the sultan weeping, crying and asking for help. The sultan wondered, 'What is the matter?' He was told that the people revolted because he did not send soldiers to fight against the invaders. Thus, he gave his order to summon me, so I went to him. I was afraid but I intended to tell the truth. When I came in he asked me, 'What is all this about ?' I answered, 'People acted in such a way because they feared the evils of the Franks. There is no doubt that the sultan did not know how near he is from the enemy. They are a week's journey from us. If they seize Aleppo, they will come nearer to you than the Euphrates River. There will be nothing to separate them from Baghdad.' I exaggerated the whole matter until he imagined himself looking at them. Thus, he said, 'Keep those commoners away from us and take as many soldiers as you like and head for the occupied land. Supplies will be sent after you.' I came out to the commoners and told them what had happened and ordered them to go back. Then, I chose ten thousand horsemen from his army and wrote to Atabeg to tell him what I had done. He ordered the army to march quickly. Soldiers

crossed the western side and while we were equipping ourselves, a messenger arrived from Atabeg telling us that the Romans and the Franks had departed Aleppo after being defeated. Thus, he ordered me not to send the soldiers. When the sultan was informed about that, he decided to send the soldiers to complete their *Jihad* and invade the Frankish countries. He intended to send his troops and make them settle and occupy the Frankish lands on this pretext. I continued to persuade the chamberlain and the important men until I managed to make the soldiers return to the eastern side, then I went to Atabeg Zangi."

Ibn al-Athir went on to say:

How great Kamal ad-Din was! He is better than ten thousand horsemen. May Allah have mercy on Atabeg; he was very careful in selecting his men from every corner of his lands.

My father said to me, "It was said to Atabeg, 'Kamal is being paid more than ten thousand royal dinars annually while others are satisfied with only five hundred dinars.' He replied, Is it your way to judge on matters and the affairs of the state?' Such a big amount of money is not enough for a person like Kamal ad-Din while five hundred pounds are too much for others. Just one mission of Kamal ad-Din is worthier than one hundred thousand dinars.'"

Chapter X

The Conquest of Edessa by Atabeg

[100] Edessa was invaded by Joslin who was one of the tyrants of the Franks and a prominent leader and horseman. Atabeg besieged the

city for twenty-eight days and established Islamic rule. Edessa was one of the Christian's honorable cities. It was one of the most important cities to the Christians; the most important of which were Jerusalem, Antioch, Romiyah, Constantinople and Edessa The Muslims, who were living in Edessa, were greatly affected by the Franks who also seized some fortresses in the area between Mardin and the Euphrates. Their violent raids reached Amid, Bakr, Mardin, Ra's `Ayn and ar-Ruqqah. Furthermore, they used to raid Harran from time to time.

Atabeg realized that he would not be able to strike them as long as Joslin remained their leader. Thus, he began to resort to intrigues and tactics hoping that Joslin might leave and go to any other place. He pretended that he would not approach Edessa and he fought mildly against neighboring places like Diyar Bakr. Furthermore, he appointed some men to inform him as soon as the Franks departed from Edessa. When Joslin saw that Atabeg was busy fighting in Diyar Bakr, he thought that Atabeg would not fight him and indeed he did not have the courage to do that. For this reason Joslin left Edessa and went to his Levantine domains in order to take care of them and to examine his ammunition and the extent of his wealth.

Knowing that Joslin had left Edessa, Atabeg hurried to it along with his troops and besiege it until he managed to conquer it. He destroyed the crosses of the city, killed the extremist priests and monks and many of the cavalry. His troops took everything as booty. When he settled in the city, he admired it and did not want such a beautiful place to be destroyed, so he ordered to return what had been taken like furniture, money, slaves and children. Everything was returned and the place became populated and organized again. He reorganized the place and headed for the fortresses that had been invaded by the Franks and conquered them. The people were safe and it was a great victory.

[101] Ibn al-Athir said:

Some trustworthy and pious people informed me that on the day of the conquest of Edessa sheikh Abu `Abdullah ibn `Ali ibn Mahran who was a great ascetic stayed for ^ long time in his own hermitage. Then he went out feeling delighted, optimistic and extremely relieved. When he sat down he said, "One of our friends told me that Atabeg Zangi conquered Edessa and our friend was among the conquerors this day. Nothing will harm you after today's achievements, Zangi!" This was the same day in which the conquest took place. Then some soldiers who participated in this conquest came to the sheikh and told him, "Since we saw you by the wall, we came to know for sure about the victory." The sheikh denied his presence while they swore that they had already seen him!

[102] Ibn al-Athir added:

A genealogist told me, "The king of Sicily was Frankish at the time of the conquest of Edessa. A good Moroccan sheikh was there and the king used to summon him and shower him with gifts. The king trusted him and preferred him to his monks and priests. When Edessa was conquered, the king sent out a great army that traveled by sea to Africa. They looted, raided, and captured. The news came to the king while this Moroccan sheikh was present and feeling sleepy. The king woke him up and said, "O, jurist! Our kinsmen inflicted the Muslims with so and so, where was your Prophet then to defend them?" The sheikh replied, "He came to conquer Edessa." The Frankish attendants laughed but the king said to them, "Do not laugh; I swear that he said so because he is sure of it." The king felt great sadness and it was not long until the news came that Atabeg had taken control of Edessa. They were shocked and distressed because the city was greatly revered by the Christians.

[103] Ibn al-Athir continued:

More than one person whom I trust told me that a pious man said, "I dreamt about Atabeg after his assassination; he was in a perfect state and I said to him, 'How did Allah award you?' He replied, 'He forgave me.' I said, 'What for?' He replied, 'For the conquest of Edessa.'"

Chapter XI

The Death of the Martyr Zangi

[104] Ibn al-Athir said:

Sultan Malikshah had delivered the castle of Ja`bar (a castle by the Euphrates) to prince Salim al `Aqili when Qasim ad Dawlah seized Aleppo. Prince Salim and his sons kept it until 541 A.H. (1146 A.C.). Then Atabeg headed out toward it and laid siege to it in order not to leave a city that was not his own among his territories; he was extremely cautious. He besieged it himself until the 5th of Rabi`. While he was sleeping, some of his Mamelukes stabbed him and escaped to the citadel. His companions did not notice that and when the killers ascended to the citadel, the dwellers of that place shouted to the soldiers and told them about his murder. His companions hurried to him. Some of them found him breathing his last. Allah ended his life as a martyr.

He met his end and I was not sure
That death would take a life so pure.

Alas! This great star of Islam eclipsed! This great supporter of the faith died!

Ibn al-Athir added:

His sons were Sayf ad-Din Ghazi who succeeded him, Nur ad-Din Mahmud, Qutb ad-Din Mawdud the father of the kings of Mosul, Nusrat ad-Din Amir Amiran and he had one daughter. The kingdom was inherited by the sons of Qutb ad-Din who had unique characteristics.

[105] I commented:

One of the wonders of conquering the castle of Ja`bar was that when the castle was besieged, Ibn Hassan al-Manbiji came at night and called the ruler of the castle. He said to him, "This is my king Atabeg. He is the ruler of these lands and has come to fight you with countless soldiers, while you have neither chamberlain nor supporter. I suggest that I may intervene and ask the king to compensate you for this castle. Were he not to do so, what are you waiting for then?" The ruler of the castle replied, "I am waiting for the same thing that your father waited for."

It happened that Balk ibn Buhram, the ruler of Aleppo, besieged the father of Hassan in Manbij and set up petards. One day he said to Hassan, "Will you surrender? What are you waiting for?' Hassan said to him, "I am waiting for an arrow." The next day while Balk was preparing a petard, he was shot by an arrow from an unknown place. He got it in his neck which was the only unprotected place in his body.

When ibn Hassan heard that, he withdrew. Atabeg was murdered in the same night.

Chapter XII

The Biography of the Martyr Atabeg Zangi

[106] He was one of the best kings and his subjects lived in absolute peace; the strong could not wrong the weak.

[107] Ibn al-Athir said:

My father told me, "Atabeg came to us in the island of Ibn `Umar in wintertime. He settled in the castle and his troops stayed in the camps. Prince `Izz ad-Din Abu Bakr ad-Dabisi was among his princes and he was one of the most famous and judicious counselors. Ad-Dabisi settled in a house owned by a Jew. The Jew hurried to seek help from Atabeg who asked him about the situation and the Jew told him the whole story. Ad-Dabisi was beside Atabeg; Zangi glinted at ad-Dabisi angrily but he did not utter a word. Then ad-Dabisi withdrew himself and returned to the city and ordered that his camp be set up outside it. The land was too muddy to set up a camp. I saw the workers while they were carrying the mud in order to be able to set up his camp. When they found that the land was too muddy, they put down straw."

Ibn al-Athir added:

Zangi used to forbid his companions from owning properties and used to say, "As we control these lands, we have no need to possess any part of them, because the fiefs compensate us. Were these lands to be taken from us, the properties would also be taken. If the properties were given to the followers of the king, they would oppress people and take their properties."

[108] Ibn al-Athir went on to say:

Due to his sound reasoning, he dispatched a group of the Turks to the Levant and made them settle in Aleppo. He then ordered them to fight the Franks. He used to grant them whatever they seized from the Frankish territories and appoint them as governors there. The Turks continued to fight the Franks by day and night and they seized many villages and secured that great city. These domains were kept with the Turks until 600 A.H. (1203 A.C.).

[109] He added:

Atabeg was an unbelievably courageous warrior. He was extremely protective especially of the spouses of his soldiers; he never forgave anyone who caused them any harm. He used to say, "My soldiers are always with me in my conquests and they seldom stay at home. Were we not to keep their women safe, they would turn loose."

[110] He narrated:

Nur ad-Din Hasan al-Barbati was the keeper of the castle of aj-Jazirah and he was a close friend of Zangi, but he had a bad reputation. Zangi knew that this keeper used to molest the women of his soldiers. Zangi ordered his chamberlain Saladin al-Yaghbisani to go to him hurriedly and break into the castle. When he reached there, he should arrest al-Barbati, cut his penis, tear out his eyes and then crucify him. Al-Barbati did not know anything about that and when he informed him that Saladin had come to the castle; he went out to receive him. Saladin said to him, "Our sultan Atabeg greets you and wants to promote you and raise your rank. He wants to grant you the castle of Aleppo and appoint you as a ruler over all the Levantine territories up to Mosul." The poor man was extremely happy and collected all his wealth to take to Mosul. When Nur ad-Din collected

all his wealth. Saladin punished him with all he was ordered to do and confiscated all his wealth so as not to let anyone do that again.

[111] Ibn al Athir added:

He used to distribute one hundred royal dinars among the poor every Friday in public and during the week days he would give secretly. One day he was riding his horse and it tripped that he almost fell of. He summoned one of the princes who were with him and told him something which the prince did not understand. The prince returned home, bade farewell to his wife and decided to run away. His wife said to him, "What did you do wrong? What is the reason for your escape?" He told her the whole story. She said, "Nasir ad-Din, the chamberlain of Zangi, is on good terms with you; tell him the story and do whatever he orders you." "I fear that he may prevent me from running away and that I will be killed," was his reply. His wife kept persuading and strengthening him until he agreed and told Nasir ad-Din who laughed and said, "Take this purse and go to him; it is what he asked for." He said, "I seek protection of Allah for my blood and life!" Nasir ad-Din said, "Do not panic; he was only after these dinars." The prince went to Zangi and when Zangi saw him he asked him, "Do you have anything with you? "Yes," he replied. Zangi ordered him to give it to the poor. Once he finished, he went to Nasir ad-Din and asked him, "How did you know that he wanted the purse of dinars?" Nasir ad-Din answered, "Zangi used to give this amount of money in charity on this day. On that day, no one came to take the money. I was informed that his horse tripped and he was about to fall; thus, he remembered the charity and asked you to come to me."

[112] He went on to say:

People used to fear Zangi so much. My father told me that one day Zangi went out of the castle and found one of his sailors sleeping. Some of his guards woke the man up. Once he saw Zangi he fainted, and they tried to move him but he was dead!

[113] He added:

Zangi had a stable and strong character. He never betrayed any of his friends from the time he became sultan until he was murdered. Thus, they used to advise and pay from their wealth to keep him secure. No one felt lonely among his men; if he was a soldier, they would take care of him and direct him. If he was one of the divan, he would go to the men of the divan who would honor him as a guest. If he was a scholar, he would go to the community of scholars like Banu ash-Shaharazuri who would treat him so kindly and he would feel at home among them. The reason for this was that he used to select his aids carefully. He also used to shower his supporters with gifts and give them high salaries so that it would be easy for them to do good deeds and be charitable.

Chapter XIII

The Incidents That Followed the Murder of Zangi

[114] Abu Ya`la said:

King Alp Arsalan the son of the Seljuk sultan Mas`ud set out with his companions for Mosul with Sayf ad-Din Ghazi ibn `Imad ad-Din Atabeg. `Ali Kojak the ruler of Mosul did not surrender for a while

until they reached a point of agreement after which he agreed to meet them and give up the position for Sayf ad-Din Ghazi. Ghazi became the ruler and prince Sayf ad-Dawlah Siwar and Saladin Muhammad ibn Ayyub al-Yaghbasani went back to Aleppo with prince Nur ad-Din Mahmud ibn Zangi. He began to form an army and reform the city. Consequently, he came to hold the reigns of power, took control of his subjects and managed to put an end to all troubles there.

Ibn Tayy al-Halabi said:

Asad ad-Din Shirkuh rode hurriedly to the camp of Nur ad-Din. He said to Nur ad-Din, "I knew that the vizier Jamal ad-Din had joined the soldiers of Mosul and favored your brother and made him the ruler of Mosul. Most of the soldiers have joined them. I suggest that you head out for Aleppo and make it your capital and mobilize the soldiers of the Levant and join them to your army. I firmly believe that you will seize the whole kingdom one day because whoever wants to conquer the Levant should first seize Aleppo. Whoever seizes Aleppo will seize the whole East."

Then he ordered the callers to inform the people and the soldiers of the Levant who had gathered and had become loyal to Nur ad-Din. They went to Aleppo and conquered it on 7th Rabi` al-Awwal. When they reached its castle, Asad ad-Din called its ruler and told him about the matter. Nur ad-Din took control of it because of Asad ad-Din. Nur ad-Din appreciated that and Asad ad-Din used to be proud of that and he was the main reason for making him the ruler of Aleppo.

Ibn al-Athir said:

When Sayf ad-Din settled the affairs of his kingdom, he returned to the Levant in order to know how things were going on and on what terms he should treat his brother Nur ad-Din who had settled in

Aleppo. Sayf ad-Din delayed going to his brother out of fear He used to correspond with him asking for his favors and he would give him whatever he asked for in order to win his pleasure. They agreed to meet away from the armed troops and everyone would have five hundred horsemen. On the appointed day, Nur ad-Din left his camp with five hundred horsemen, but Sayf ad-Din went with only five horsemen. Nur ad-Din did not recognize his brother's army until they approached them because of their small number. When Nur ad-Din saw his brother, he recognized him and dismounted his horse and went to him. He fell on his knees and kissed the land beneath him and ordered his horsemen to withdraw. Nur ad-Din and Sayf ad-Din sat down after they hugged each other and wept.

Sayf ad-Din addressed Nur ad-Din, "Why did you not come to me? Did you fear that I might kill you? By Allah, I have never thought of such a thing. What do possessions avail? With whom will I live and from whom should I seek support, if I behave so dishonestly with my brother and the most beloved person to me?"

Nur ad-Din felt relaxed and safe. Hence, he returned to Aleppo. He equipped his army and came back with his soldiers but this time in the service of his brother Sayf ad-Din, who said to him, "I have no interest in your staying here. My purpose was that I wanted the Frankish kings to know that we are on good terms with each other so that they might stay away from us."

[115] Ibn al-Athir said:

When Zangi was killed, Joslin sent for the inhabitants of Edessa and most of them were Armenians. He set out on a certain day to reach them and he seized the city. The Muslims who were in the fortress did not surrender and decided to fight. He fought them fiercely.

Nur ad-Din knew what was happening while he was in Aleppo and he marched his soldiers to Edessa. When Joslin came to know that Nur ad-Din was approaching he escaped. Nur ad-Din conquered the city, looted it and captured its inhabitants. Sayf ad-Din Ghazi knew about the Frankish aggression while he was in Mosul, so he equipped his army and marched to the city. When he reached there, he found that Nur ad-Din had already conquered it. As a result, he willingly left the city for his brother.

[116] He added:

Nur ad-Din sent some of the booty he had gained from the city to the princes. He sent some maidens to Zayn ad-Din; Zayn ad-Din went to see them and then came back after he had washed. He was laughing and when he was asked about the reason, he replied, "When we conquered Edessa with Zangi, there was a maiden in the booty whom I coveted. I had decided to make love to her but I heard the caller of Zangi asking for the maidens and the booty to be returned. Thus, I did not touch her and returned her. Now, Nur ad-Din sent my share of maidens to me and I discovered that this maiden was among them so I immediately made love to her lest Nur ad-Din orders me to return her."

Chapter XIV

The Frankish Attack on Damascus

[117] Abu Ya`la said:

In this year there was continual news that some Roman and Frankish kings had gathered in huge numbers in order to attack the

Islamic lands. They urged their citizens to set out to fight this war. With innumerable groups, they left their lands unprotected and collected massive amounts of equipment, ammunition, money, and soldiers. It was said that there were more than a million warriors and horsemen. They seized Constantinople and its king had to accept their terms and to keep peace with them. The neighboring Muslims states proceeded to take the necessary defensive measures when they heard about that. They headed for the roads and fortified border cities and passageways from which the Franks could invade their lands. The Muslims continued to carry out raids on the Franks who were on the borders and fought them fiercely until large numbers were killed or starved to death. This was the state of affairs until the end of 542 A.H (1147 A.C.)

Events of 543 A.H. (1148 A.C.)

News heralded the arrival of the Frankish ships to the seashores of Tyre and Acre and their collaboration with the Franks in these cities. It was said that the number of Franks there amounted to 800,000 after the killing, diseases and starvation they had been subjected to. They headed for Jerusalem to perform pilgrimage and after that some of them returned home by sea. Many of them died as well as some of their kings. After a long discussion and many disputes, they decided to conquer Damascus.

Ibn al-Athir said:

In a massive army, the German king marched with his Frankish soldiers to the Levant. When he arrived, he and the Levantine Franks

agreed to conquer Damascus thinking that it would be an easy target because of their huge army. At that time, Damascus was under the rule of Mujir ad-Din Artaq ibn Muhammad ibn Buri ibn Tughtakin; yet, he was not its real ruler for it was ruled by Mu`in ad-Din Anar who was the Mameluke of his grandfather Tughtakin. Mu`in mobilized the soldiers and some of the people of Damascus in order to protect the city from the Franks who besieged them on 6th Rabi` al-Awwal.

[118] Among those who joined the army was the venerable sheikh Hujjat ad-Din Abu al-Hajjaj Yusuf ibn Dunas al-Findalawi, the Imam of the Maliki *Madhhab* in Damascus. He was an aged ascetic man who joined the army but he did not mount any horse.

When he saw him, Mu`in ad-Din went to him with great respect and greeted him politely saying, "O great sheikh, you are exempted in this case for your age. We all can perform *Jihad* instead of a white-haired man like you. You have no ability to fight and participate in *Jihad*."

But the sheikh answered him, "I have sold and He (Exalted and Glorified be he) has purchased. So I will never cancel such a deal." Sheikh Abu al-Hajjaj meant the Qur'anic verse, ﴿*Verily, Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their properties; for the price that theirs shall be Paradise.*﴾[1] He fought fiercely until he was martyred; may the mercy of Allah be upon him.

The Muslims were lacking in strength to fight the Franks who constituted a great power. Thus, Mu`in ad-Din sent to Sayf ad-Din informing him about the bad state of affairs and asked him for help. Immediately, Sayf ad-Din mobilized his troops and marched to Hims, then he sent a message to Mu`in ad-D'n saying, "I came accompanied by all who can take up arms in my territory. I came to you while Damascus is not under the rule of any of my representatives or fellows;

1. At-Tawbah: 111.

so if I am defeated, Allah forbid, we will be all murdered for our territory is not far from yours. Thereupon, Damascus and other Islamic states will be an easy target for the Franks. If you want me to confront them, you should surrender Damascus to a trustworthy person from among my fellows. I swear, if I beat them, I will not stay there and I will leave it immediately to you after which I will return to my homeland."

Mu`in ad-Din put off answering him in order to know how the Franks would react. Then, Sayf ad-Din sent to the German Franks threatening to attack them if they did not leave. Moreover, Mu`in ad-Din sent a message to them saying, "The king of the East has come to you with a storming army. You must leave our territory otherwise I will submit it to him and then you will never dream of safety." Furthermore, he sent a message to the Levantine Franks intimidating them about the German Franks. He told them, "You are on the horns of a dilemma: if the German Franks occupy Damascus, you will lose all the lands under your control. And if I surrender Damascus to Sayf ad Din, you will never be able to fight him off or prevent him from conquering Jerusalem." Mu`in ad-Din promised to deliver them the fortress of Baniyas if they managed to persuade the German Franks to leave Damascus.

Certain of the truthfulness of Mu`in ad-Din's words, the Franks accepted his offer. Therefore, they gathered together with the German king and frightened him with accounts of Sayf ad-Din, his numerous soldiers and endless means of support. They told him that Sayf ad-Din might get hold of Damascus and then they would never be able to reside in the Levant. He granted their demand and left Damascus and the Levantine Franks departed as well.

Consequently, they delivered the fortress of Baniyas from Mu`in ad-Din. It remained under their control until Nur ad-Din conquered it as will be mentioned afterwards.

Chapter XV

[119] The scholar Abu al-Qasim ibn `Asakir (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) mentioned in his book that someone had a dream about the jurist al-Fandalawi. He asked al-Fandalawi, "Where are you now?" "In the Gardens of Eden on comfortable beds," he replied. His tomb is being visited now .n an area called the tombs of "Bab as-Saghir". It has a large cenotaph on which nis biography is inscribed.

Chapter XVI

[120] Abu Ya`la at-Tamimi said:

In Rajab of this year it was said that Nur ad-Din, the ruler of Aleppo, stopped the callers from saying, "Come to the best deeds" at the end of the call to Dawn prayer. Also, he completely rejected blaspheming the Companions of the Prophet. He was helped by the group of Ahl as-Sunnah (The supporters of the Sunnah) in Aleppo. All these actions annoyed the Ismailites and the Shiite who raged with anger but they did not dare do anything out of fear of Nur ad-Din.

[121] He added:

In Rajab, the preachers were only allowed to speak on the common topics. Previously, they used to speak about unnecessary and sensitive issues like differences between sects and their special characteristics; thus people became conf.ised.

Events of 544 A.H. (1149 A.C.)

[122] Ibn al-Athir said:

In this year Nur ad-Din went to Famiyah fortress that was under the control of the Franks. It was far from Hamah and was well fortified and built on a high hill. Its Frankish inhabitants used to raid Hamah and Shayzar; they used to humiliate the people of those lands. Nur ad-Din went to this fortress and besieged it preventing anyone from escaping day or night. He fought them incessantly. The Franks from many territories decided to collaborate in order to force him to retreat; but before his arrival, he managed to seize the fortress and fill it with ammunition, food, and men. When he knew about the Franks' coming, he marched out to meet them and when they saw his readiness to fight, they withdrew to their lands and forged a peace treaty with him.

Chapter XVII

The Death of Sayf Ad-Din Ghazi Ibn Zangi, the Elder Brother of Nur ad-Din

[123] Ibn al-Athir said:

Previously, Atabeg Zangi conquered Dara and it remained under his control until his death after which the ruler of Mardin seized it.

Sayf ad-Din ibn Zangi set out to it in 544 A.H. (1149 A.C.) and managed to conquer it. He conquered most of Mardin and seized Diyar Bakr and restored what had been taken after his father's death. His soldiers were guilty of looting and devastation. The ruler of Mardin commented: Were we complaining about Atabeg? Where are his days? They were feasts compared to nowadays. He besieged us and he never oppressed anyone, nor did his soldiers take a bundle of straw without paying for it.

Perhaps I mourn over a day's failure,
Then I would regret that the day is over.

He then reconciled Sayf ad-Din and married his daughter, al-Khatun, to him. Sayf ad-Din left Mardin and went to Mosul and al-Khatun was prepared and sent to him. She reached Mosul while he was on his deathbed; he died before consummating his marriage. This took place at the end of Jumada al-Akhirah and he was about forty years old. He was buried in the great school, which he had built in Mosul. He left a son whom Nur ad-Din Mahmud, his uncle, brought up and married him to his niece, the daughter of Qutb ad-Din Mawdud. He died in the prime of his youth.

Chapter XVIII

Ibn al-Athir said:

When Sayf ad-Din Ghazi died, his brother Qutb ad-Din Mawdud was in Mosul. Jamal ad-Din and Zayn ad-Din, the chamberlains of Sayf ad-Din Ghazi, agreed to appoint Qutb ad-Din in order to gain his

favor because he was a good-natured man. They sent for him and pledged allegiance to him and he, in turn, took an oath. He moved to the palace of the sultan. Princes and troops pledged allegiance to him as they used to with Jamal ad-Din and Zayn ad-Din. Hence, he became a king who was well-secured.

[124] When he assumed power, he married his brother's wife al-Khatun the daughter of Husam ad-Din Tamrtash, the ruler of Mardin. She gave birth to some sons of Qutb ad-Din who became kings of Mosul afterwards. None of Qutb ad-Din's sons became a ruler except hers.

Ibn al-Athir said:

It was religiously lawful for al-Khatun to take off her veil before fifteen kings from her fathers, brothers, nephews, husbands, sons, and grandsons.

Ibn al-Athir mentioned their names in his book. In this respect, she was like Fatimah, the daughter of `Abd al-Malik ibn Marawan and the wife of `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz. She was also religiously permitted to take off her veil before thirteen Caliphs beginning with Mu`awiyah to the last of the Umayyad Caliphs except Marawan ibn Muhammad who was her cousin. Fatimah's mother was `Atikah bint Yazid ibn Mu`awiyah; thus, Mu`awiyah was her mother's grandfather. Yazid himself was her maternal grandfather, Mu`awiyah ibn Yazid was her uncle, Marawan was ner paternal grandfather, `Abd al-Malik was ner father; al-Walid, Sulyaman, Hisham and Yazid were her brothers; `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz was her husband and al-Walid, Yazid, and ibn al-Walid were her nephews. All of them were Caliphs.

However, something that ibn al-Athir mentioned was not quite right as `Atikah bint Yazid was not her mother, for her mother was a woman from the tribe of Makhzum. Thereupon, Fatimah was

religiously permitted to take off her veil before ten Caliphs: Marawan ibn al-Hakam and his offspring, except for Marawan ibn Muhammad; while `Atikah was permitted to take off her veil before all of the fourteen Umayyad Caliphs except for `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz and Marwan ibn al-Hakam.

The one who outnumbered both of them in terms of the unmarriageable Caliphs that she could remove her veil legally before was Sittu-ash-Sham bint Ayyub. Their number was more than thirty *Mahrams* (unmarriageable kins); they were her four brothers al-Mu`azzam, Saladin, al-`Adil, Sayf ad-Din, their sons, grandsons, her nephews from her elder brother Shahanshah ibn Ayyub, Taqiyy ad-Din and his offspring who were the rulers of Hamah and Farrukhshah and his son, al-Amjad, the ruler of Ba`labak.

Chapter XIX

[125] Abu Ya`la said:

Nur ad-Din knew that the Franks were looting and devastating Huran so he decided to march out to fight them. He sent a message to those in Damascus in order to inform them of his intention to fight the enemies and that he wanted a thousand horsemen led by a reliable leader. Previously, the ruler of Damascus had held a treaty with the Franks to fight against the Muslim armies together.

When Nur ad-Din approached Damascus and they knew about his arrival, (but they did not know his destination), they had contacted the Franks asking for their help. Heedless of their conspiracies, Nur

ad-Din decided to continue the *Jihad* and ordered his soldiers not to harm any of the peasants. There had been a season of aridity and there had been no rain for a long period in the area of Huran, al-Marj and al-Ghutah; thus, a lot of the inhabitants had left the place. When Nur ad-Din reached Ba`labak on Tuesday the 3rd of Dhu al-Hijjah, it rained heavily. People supplicated for Nur ad-Din and said that the rain fell owing to his sincerity and justice.

On 26th of Dhu al-Hijjah, Nur ad-Din sent a message to both Mujir ad-Din and the chief and told them, "I did not come here to fight you but when I knew about the complaints of the Muslim peasants that the Franks loot and enslave their women and children and no one helps them, I have no choice but to help and support them and struggle against the disbelievers and I have the ability to struggle for the Muslims; praise be to Allah. I know about your weakness and negligence, which drove you to seek help from the Franks against me and to give them the possessions of the weak and the needy. This cannot please Allah or any Muslim. We need one thousand horsemen urgently in order to save the borders of Ashkelon and Gaza."

They answered him saying, "War will be our reply; the Franks will support us to defeat you if you intend to come here."

When the message reached him he was surprised and decided to fight them but the heavy rain prevented him.

Events of 545 A.H. (1150 A.C.)

In the very beginning of Muharram, Nur ad-Din and the ruler of Damascus held a peace treaty. The reason behind this was that Nur

ad-Din hated shedding more Muslims' blood if he continued his war. They obeyed him and supplicated to Allah for him on the Friday's sermon after the sultan and the Caliph; furthermore, his name was inscribed on coins.

Chapter XX

Conquering `Azzaz[1]

[126] Abu Ya`la said:

On the fifth of Muharram, news came that the Turkish soldiers had captured Joslin, the ruler of `Azzaz, and some of his companions and had imprisoned them in the castle of Aleppo. The people were happy because of this victory. Nur ad Din headed for `Azzaz and besieged it until Allah made it easy for him to conquer it even though it was well fortified. When he got it, he appointed some trustworthy men to manage it. Finally, he left it victorious to Aleppo in Rabi` al-Awwal.

Chapter XXI

Capture of Joslin

[127] Nur ad-Din marched his troops to the fortresses which lie north of Aleppo including the fortress of Bashir hill, `Ayn Tab and

1. A town near Aleppo.

`Azzaz that were under the control of Joslin who sought help from the Franks. They confronted Nur ad-Din and fought him fiercely until they defeated the Muslims. This was a disaster for Nur ad-Din who began to employ all kinds of tactics and plots. He knew that if he gathered the Islamic armies, the Franks would support Joslin and fight him. He summoned some Turkish mercenaries and paid them generously in order to capture Joslin dead or alive! It so happened that Joslin had gone with a group of his soldiers and raided some Turks. They looted and captured some of them. Among the captives was an extremely beautiful woman whom Joslin coveted and tried to have sex with her under a tree. The Turks hurried to him and he rode his horse and began fighting them. Finally, they managed to capture him. He asked them to release him in return for a great ransom. They agreed and kept it secret and Joslin sent for the money. A Turk went to the assistant of Nur ad-Din in Aleppo and told him what had happened. The assistant sent some warriors with him and they took Joslin by force from the Turks.

At that time, Nur ad-Din was in Hims. Joslin's capture was a great victory because he was a bitter enemy of the Muslims. He was the prominent leader of the Franks in their wars against the Muslims because of his hatred for Islam and the Muslims. The Christians were greatly affected by his capture and the Frankish lands became an easy target for the Muslims. He never kept his word nor did he fulfill his promise. Many Frankish fortified cities were conquered after his capture like `Ayn Tab, `Azzaz, al-Barah fortress, Khalid Hill, Kafr Latha and Mar`ash.

Whenever Nur ad-Din conquered a fortress, he used to fill it with men and ammunition, which would be sufficient for ten years. He used to do so because of his fear of Frankish attacks.

[128] Abu Ya`la said:

A group of pilgrims from Iraq and Khorasan, who had been captured during their return by the disbelievers of al-`Urban, arrived in the month of al-Muharram. They narrated an account of an unprecedented disaster that was so horrible. This group of pilgrims consisted of prominent persons from Khorasan, including jurisprudents, scientists, judges, a large number of women, enormous sums of money, and a lot of luggage. All these things were taken, a lot of people were killed, women were violated and many died as a result of hunger and thirst. Some generous people from Damascus gave clothing to these people as well as whatever was necessary for them to return to their homes.

Events of 546 A.H. (1151 A.C.)

[129] In this year, Nur ad-Din besieged Damascus because its people asked the Franks for support. Preparations for the besiegement took place and the messengers of Nur ad-Din were sent to the rulers of the country. In all his messages, Nur ad-Din repeated, "I seek only the best interests of the Muslims, fighting the disbelievers, and the freedom of the captives. If you help me in our fight against the disbelievers, it will be the best situation." To his surprise the replies he received were unsatisfactorily; so he settled near the mosque of al Qidam and did not march to Damascus so as to avoid killing innocent souls.

The gathering of the Franks to support the people of Damascus became well-known; the pious among the people denied these bad and

weird conditions. Skirmishes occurred continuously but without real fighting. The soldiers of Nur ad-Din marched and they were innumerable. Furthermore, their numbers increased daily as supporters, including the Turks, from all directions joined their ranks. However, Nur ad-Din did not permit any of his soldiers to attack the enemy.

He decided to head toward az-Zabadani in order to deceive them and oblige them to come to him. Then, he sent a team of about forty thousand horsemen with some majors to stay in Huran with the Arabs to await the Franks and then fight them.

When the Franks gathered with the camp from Damascus, they headed for Busra to besiege and fight it but they could not. The ruler of Busra turned up and fought them fiercely, so they turned away empty-handed. The soldiers of the Franks contacted Mujir ad-Din and Mu'yyid ad-Din asking for their plots of land, which were given to them as a fief in return for the dismissal of Nur ad-Din from Damascus. They said, "Without our help, Nur ad-Din would never leave you."

[130] Abu Ya`la said:

News of the arrival of the well-equipped Egyptian navy to the coastal city became well-known. It was mentioned that the number of its manned military boats amounted to seventy. This fleet was matchless and it cost, as was narrated, about three hundred thousand dinars. The fleet drew near to the seaports of the Franks at Yafa and the fighters killed, captured and burned whatever they encountered. Then they captured a large number of Roman and Frankish boats. After that, they went to Acre, the coastal city, and they did the same; they seized many Frankish military boats and killed a large number of

warriors. They also went to the seaports of Sayda, Beirut and Tripoli doing the same.

Nur ad-Din promised to march to this fleet to help it confront and overcome the Franks. This coincided with his return to Damascus with the intention of besieging it. He considered taking control of Damascus and making himself king because of its weakness and the way its soldiers supported him as well as its subjects. He was well-known for his justice.

Nur ad-Din reviewed his soldiers and found that their number was thirty thousand. He left and settled in the land of Dariyya near Damascus. The soldiers and the youth were summoned to them but only a small number responded. Minor skirmishes took place between the two parties but without any serious fighting because both groups were Muslims. Nur ad-Din said, "There is no need for the Muslims to kill each other and I would like to save their souls so they can fight the disbelievers."

Correspondence continued in order to settle the disputes between the people of Damascus according to certain terms and conditions. The jurisprudent Burhan ad-Din al-Balkhi, prince Sa'd ad-Din Shirkuh, and his brother Najm ad-Din Ayyub took on the responsibility of these correspondences. The situation was finally settled and the people of Damascus agreed on the suggested terms. Oaths were made between the two sides on the 10th of Rabi' al-Akhir.

After that Nur ad-Din headed toward Busra after taking from Damascus all that he needed in terms of military equipment. He intended to attack the city because of the disobedience of its ruler, Sarkhak, and his affiliation with the Franks.

Chapter XXII

Some Events of This Year

[131] Abu Ya`la said:

News came from Egypt that the rate of mortality in Damietta was extremely high. There were seven thousand dead in 545 A.H. (1150 A.C.) and the same number in 546 A.H. (1151 A.C.); thus the total number amounted to fourteen thousands. Many houses were empty and remained closed.

Also, Mujir ad-Din, the ruler of Damascus, went to Aleppo with his prominent companions on the 12th of Rajab. When he arrived he met Nur ad-Din, the ruler of Aleppo, who honored and granted him great favors. They agreed on some suggestions especially when Mujir ad-Din offered his allegiance to Nur ad-Din and promised to act on his behalf in Damascus. Mujir ad-Din returned happily on the 6th of Sha`ban.

[132] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

Some Turks raided the fortress of Baniyas in 546 A.H. (1151 A.C.) and the Franks of Baniyas came out to salvage what was left but the Turks defeated them. When the ruler of Damascus came to know about that, he was extremely angry because there was a truce between him and the Franks. As a result, he sent some soldiers to the Turks and took back what had been taken. When the Franks knew what had happened, they prepared a storming army and waged war on specific places. They took a lot of captives and spoils.

When Najm ad-Din knew about the raids of the Franks during his stay in Ba`labak, he ordered his son Shams ad-Dawlah[1], together with a group of soldiers from Damascus and his friends, to wage war against the Franks. They managed to defeat them, as the Franks were in trouble amidst a lot of snow. Shams ad-Dawlah took advantage of this situation and killed a lot of them and released the captives that had been taken by the Franks.

[133] He added:

In that year, Saladin left his father and went to Aleppo to be in the service of his uncle, Asad ad-Din. His uncle introduced him to Nur ad-Din who embraced him and granted him pieces of land as a fief.

Events of 547 A.H. (1152 A.C.)

[134] Abu Ya`la said:

There was news that Nur ad-Din had conquered the fortress of Antarsus with his soldiers in Muharram and killed the Franks who were there. The remaining Franks appealed to him to spare their lives and he agreed. Then he arranged for guards to remain there and returned. He controlled a lot of fortresses by different means; that is it to say, captivity, sword, destruction, arson and asking for security.

At that time, the news came that the men of Ashkelon had won the battle and had defeated the neighboring Franks in Gaza. Many of the Franks were killed and the rest were defeated.

1. He is the father of Saladin, his biography will be mentioned in detail afterwards Allah willing.

Events of 549 A.H. (1154 A.C.)

[135] Ibn al-Athir said:

Nur ad-Din ruled Damascus and took it from its former ruler Mujir ad-Din Anq ibn Muhammad in that year. He did so because the Franks seized Ashkelon which was a place of special significance and beauty. When they besieged it, Nur ad-Din was unable to prevent them because there was no other way to go there except through Damascus and doing so meant confronting the Franks. Conquering Ashkelon strengthened the Franks to the extent that they thought of conquering Damascus. They also treated Mujir ad-Din as a weak person and launched raids on the provisions he ruled. The Franks also imposed taxes on the Muslims and sent their messengers to Damascus to collect these taxes from the people of the country. In addition, the Franks reviewed their bondmen and bondmaids who were captured from Christian countries and gave them the choice to stay with their masters or go back to their homes. The people of the country disobeyed Mujir ad-Din and imprisoned him in the citadel. People were terrified during these difficult times and invoked Allah to remove their distress. Allah answered their prayers and granted them salvation through the just king Nur ad-Din Mahmud

Nur ad-Din thought of controlling Damascus and he knew that it would be difficult to take it by force or to besiege it, as Mujir ad Din would immediately send to the Franks to ask for their help and support.

[136] He added:

The last thing the Franks wanted was for Nur ad-Din to take control of Damascus because he had previously attacked and controlled their fortresses without having Damascus. So, undoubtedly, the situation would be much worse if he took Damascus. In addition, Nur ad-Din hated the Muslims to be harmed in any way because of his mercy and justice. Understanding the implications of the situation, Nur ad-Din played tricks on Mujir ad-Din and so he corresponded with him, conciliated him, gave him presents and showed him love until he won his confidence. During his correspondence with Mujir ad-Din, Nur ad-Din mentioned that some princes, who were under the supervision of Mujir ad-Din, had rebelled against him and warned him against that. As a result, Mujir ad-Din expropriated the princes' lands that had been given to them as fiefs and arrested others. When Damascus was free of those princes, there was another prince called `Ata' ibn Huffazh as-Salmi al-Khadim who was magnanimous and brave and to whom Mujir ad-Din authorized the affairs of his country. The presence of `Ata' was considered an obstacle for Nur ad-Din and `Ata' ibn Huffazh was arrested and killed by Mujir ad-Din. `Ata' addressed Mujir ad-Din when the latter decided to kill him, "You have been tricked and the truth will appear to you." However, Mujir ad-Din did not listen to his words and he was killed.

Nur ad-Din's desire to control Damascus was strengthened by the death of `Ata', so he sent a message to the youth of the country and befriended them, and they agreed to give up the territory to him. He marched and besieged Damascus for ten days. Mujir ad-Din asked for the help of the Franks and offered large amounts of money and the citadel of Ba`labak if they dismissed Nur ad-Din from Damascus. When they arrived they came to know that Nur ad-Din had besieged

Damascus and that there was no way in or out, thus, they returned empty-handed. The young men with whom Nur ad Din previously corresponded rebelled and gave up the territory to him from the eastern gate. He entered safely through this gate on the tenth of Safar, besieged Mujir ad-Din in the citadel and offered him a lot of gifts including the town of Hims. Thus, Mujir ad-Din agreed to give him the citadel and went to Hims.

It was said that a woman was on the wall and she hung a rope down it upon which they climbed up into the city. A group climbed the wall and made ladders and another group came up onto the wall, raised a flag and cheerfully pronounced the name of Nur ad-Din. The people of the territory were disappointed and the gate of the territory was broken and so the cavalry entered. Finally, Nur ad-Din controlled Damascus. Asad ad-Din had the upper hand in conquering Damascus, so the affairs of Damascus were authorized by him and ar-Rahbah was given to him as a fief by Nur ad-Din.

[137] He also stated:

Nur ad-Din did great things in Damascus when he settled there. Justice prevailed throughout and Islam made everything stable. On the other hand, the disbelievers were convinced of destruction and they became extremely weak. All the Islamic territories in the Levant came under the control of Nur ad-Din. Mujir ad-Din stayed in Hims and corresponded with some people of Damascus in order to incite them against Nur ad-Din. As Nur ad Din was afraid of the poor results of these conditions, especially with neighboring Franks, he took Hims from Mujir ad-Din. Mujir ad-Din left the Levant and went to Iraq, stayed in Baghdad and built a house next to the state school and died there.

When Nur ad-Din ruled Damascus, the Franks were afraid of him because they knew he would invade their territories and kill them, so their princes and kings decided to correspond with him and befriend him.

[138] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

Saladin became one of the prominent people for Nur ad-Din and he was constantly in his company. He excelled above all people in playing polo, the game that Nur ad-Din liked so much.

Events of 551 A.H. (1156 A.C.)

[139] In this year and the next, there were a lot of earthquakes in the Levant.

Abu Ya`la said:

There was a great earthquake on the 22nd of Rabi` al-Awwal. It was preceded and followed by many tremors by day and by night. Finally, there was a great earthquake which terrified the people. It took place on the 25th of the same month. News came from Aleppo and Hamah that many places had been entirely destroyed as a result of these earthquakes. It was also mentioned that the number of earthquakes amounted to forty. Such things had never happened before.

There were two earthquakes, the first of which was at the end of the day and the second was at the end of the night. They happened on the 29th of the same month. There were several earthquakes in Ramadan; there were three earthquakes on the first day of Ramadan and a great one that terrified the people and awakened them in the middle of the night. There was also a greater earthquake on the 15th of

Ramadan and another one in the morning. Earthquakes came incessantly throughout the following days. However, Allah protected Damascus and its vicinity from these frightening events and from their continuation. All praise should be dedicated to Him the Almighty.

It was mentioned that many houses in Aleppo were destroyed because of the consecutive earthquakes. Also, the houses of Shayzar were demolished and fell on the people, so many were killed. However, the people of Kafr Tab and Hamah feared for their lives and thus escaped.

Events of 552 A.H. (1157 A.C.)

[140] There was a devastating earthquake on the 19th of Safar which was followed by another one. The same thing happened on the 20th of the same month and the following day. The Levant was badly affected. There were four earthquakes on the 25th of Jumada al-Ula and the people raised their voices in glorification and praise of Allah. There were two earthquakes on the 4th night of Jumada al-Akhirah. There was also news from the north, which stated that the earthquake had greatly affected Aleppo, so the residents were very much concerned. The same thing happened in Hims and many places were destroyed. There were also earthquakes in Hamah, Kafr Tab, Famyah and in the areas that had been rebuilt. Earthquakes were continuous so a great number of people died.

There was an unprecedented earthquake and aftershocks in Damascus on the 4th of Rajab. These earthquakes were successive, so people were extremely worried about their lives and their property.

They escaped from their homes and from any roofed areas. Many places were affected to the extent that large parts of the dome of the mosque fell and it was difficult to be restored at a later time.

Another two earthquakes took place but they did not cause any damage by Allah's Might. These were followed by many consecutive earthquakes and it was said that Hamah was totally destroyed and many people were killed. The famous fortress of Shayzar fell on its ruler, Taj ad-Dawlah ibn Abi al-`Asakir ibn Munqidh, and those who were with him. The residents of Hims were outside their houses so they were saved, but their residences and fortresses were demolished. Some houses in Aleppo were destroyed but the people left their country and were saved.

[141] Abu Ya`la said:

The people of Damascus were terrified by an earthquake on Monday, the 29th of Rajab at night. People left their homes and any roofed place and went to the mosque or the open areas. They escaped to the orchards and to the deserts. They continued praising and extolling Allah during these days because of fear. They appealed to their Creator and Sustainer to be merciful towards them.

[142] He added:

There was a great earthquake in Damascus on the 24th of Ramadan, which horrified the people. News came from Aleppo that there had been a great earthquake that had shaken a lot of its walls and houses. The case was worse in Hamah because it continued for many days. During these days, there were terrible quakes followed by various sounds that were stronger than thunder. After that many consecutive earthquakes took place and caused great horror among the people of the Levant.

[143] Ibn al-Athir said:

There was a great earthquake in the Levant in 552 A.H. (1157 A.C.); it destroyed the territories in and around it and caused many people to die. Hamah and the citadel of Shayzar were completely ruined. The fortress of Barin, al-Ma`rrah and other territories and villages were destroyed. There were innumerable people who died under the demolished residences and homes. Walls, houses, and fortresses were also demolished. Allah granted the Muslims Nur ad-Din who united and protected the Islamic territories against the Franks who had the opportunity to control the Islamic territories without besieging them or fighting.

[144] He added:

The number of dead people could not be counted. It was narrated that a teacher in Hamah left his class to deal with a personal matter and in the meantime an earthquake suddenly took place and the ceiling fell on his little students. The teacher said, "No one came to ask about any boy who had been in the class!"

[145] I read the following lines in the collection of Usamah ibn Munqidh:

Oh you unaware of the agonies of death,
In which no one could draw his breath,
How long would you keep that course of negligence,
Where the world is lost in a sea of divergence!
This land has shaken with fearful quake,
So that those oblivious may be wide-awake.

Moreover, he composed an elegy on those who perished in the Shayzar fort by the earthquake. The following is an extract of the poem:

Death has struck my people right away,
Sweeping them all with no delay.
Yet, I take patience for Allah's reward,
Thanking Him, be the act easy or hard.
I follow my ancestors who, losing their folks,
In utter resignation gave way to the strokes
When they received their destined portion,
Humbly they bowed to the frowns of fortune;
A bolt from the blue was that crack of doom,
That left us all in a sea of gloom.
Were they to feel the grief in my heart,
The miserable are alive and the happy have passed,
They perished all and left no trace,
So that we can know about their case;
Their fine palaces are turned memorials,
Therein interred are the early dwellers.
How the quakes wiped out my kindred,
Calling them to mind I turn to be frenzied.
Hence I will ever happen to show
with broken heart and spirits low.

Furthermore, as-Salih ibn Ruzzayk wrote him a poem condoling the death of his people of which the following is an extract:

For you may parent be sacrificed,
Never have you been out of my mind.
Oh my inmate there in the Levant,
Though far, my longing for you is never scant,
We are separated by the hand of fate,
Reunion is though certain, my mate.
It seems the Levant repulsed his denizens,
No wise should then stay in these homes,
No sooner had the wars subsided than quakes,
And outrageous fortunes took place.
The land danced with quakes in the gloom,
Riotous thunder roared its drone,
Dormant wishes are always stir-crazy,
While the gales have never been daisy;
Lightning, gloating, shows its teeth,
Clouds, contrarily, show frown and unease,
Not only do clouds melt with tears,
But also rocks erode by the stream,
Do they, like humans, commit mistakes
So that Almighty bears hard on them.
My doubt, like arrows, might hit right or miss,

Misfortunes befalling are only since
Islam in Jerusalem is now in absence;
The abode of revelation for Allah's Prophets
Is for all believers the sacred Big City,
And now it's replete with pigs and ale,
The cross is matched by none but the bell,
Christ was never to leave it undisputed,
Though to him it is falsely attributed.
How much is my grief on the houses,
That have turned cold and breathless.

Chapter XXIII

[146] Abu Ya`la said:

On the 13th of Rabi` al-Awwal, Nur ad-Din headed toward Ba`labak to have a look at the status quo there. He was informed that Hims and Hamah and their vicinity were invaded by the Franks. On the 15th of Rabi` al-Awwal, news came from Ra's al-Ma' that when Nasir ad-Din Amir Amiran[1] had been informed that the Franks marched a huge brigade to Baniyas to reinforce it, he marched toward them. He confronted them before getting there. Accordingly, the Frankish troops in Baniyas proceeded, but Nasir ad-Din fought them bravely. A great number of the intrepid Turkish troops were waiting to ambush the Franks.

1 He is the brother of Nur ad-Din.

Allah, the Almighty, granted the Muslim troops victory over their enemies. Only a few of the Frankish soldiers managed to escape, while most of them were killed, wounded, or captured. The Muslim troops captured a large number of horses, arms and property. The Franks who had been captured and the arms of the dead soldiers were paraded in Damascus in the presence of throngs of people. It was a memorable day. Nur ad-Din sent some of the captives to Ba`labak and ordered his men to behead them.

[147] He added:

Soon after this conquest, Asad ad-Din circulated some good news about a large number of the intrepid Turks who had joined him and managed to capture a huge brigade of the polytheists when they came out from their northern forts. The brigade was defeated and the Turks captured as many as they could.

[148] He went on to say:

Asad ad-Din reached Ba`labak with an enormous army of the Turks to strive for Allah's Sake. They met with Nur ad-Din and agreed to head toward the territories of the polytheists to subjugate them. In their way to Baniyas, Nur ad-Din went to Damascus where he stayed for a few days in order to prepare the weapons for his troops. In Damascus, he ordered his men to call the people for *Jihad*. Many people responded to his call and he left Damascus on Saturday, late Rabi` al-Awwal.

On the 7^{th} of Rabi` al-Akhir, immediately after Nur ad-Din's arrival at Baniyas, news came from Asad ad-Din's army at Hunin that the Franks had sent a brigade of one hundred knights led by the best leaders to attack the Muslims at their camps because they wrongly

thought that they were few in number. When the Franks approached, the Muslim troops attacked them violently and managed to kill a large number and capture the others. The captives of the Franks, along with the heads of their killed soldiers and their weapons were paraded in Damascus on the following Monday.

He continued:

Then the Franks came out of their forts and decided to rescue Humphrey, the ruler of Baniyas, and his companions who were all besieged in the castle of Baniyas and were at death s door. They immediately begged Nur ad-Din to grant them safety in return for their property and the castle. Nur ad-Din did not answer their demands.

In spite of the Muslim troops who besieged Baniyas and those who guarded the road, the king of the Franks reached Baniyas secretly with his knights via a mountainous path. The Frankish king managed to rescue all those who were besieged. When they saw the destruction of Baniyas, they lost hope of ever reconstructing it.

[149] After some days of Ramadan had passed, Nur ad-Din began to suffer from a severe disease. When his condition worsened, Nur ad-Din felt worried and summoned his brother Nasrat ad-Din Amir Amiran, Asad ad-Din Shirkuh and the most notable princes. They all decided that his brother, Nasrat ad-Din, would succeed him after his death and reside in Aleppo; while Asad ad-Din would reside in Damascus on behalf of Nasrat ad-Din.

When Nur ad-Din's health got worse, he went to Aleppo and settled in the castle there. Asad ad-Din headed to Damascus to defend it from the corruption of the Franks. Rumors about Nur ad-Din's health spread far and wide. Thus, disorder arose among the Muslims and the Franks seized the opportunity and attacked the city of Shayzar

where they killed, plundered, and captured a lot of people. Great throngs of Ismailites and others gathered from many directions and managed to defeat the Franks. They killed a large number of them and chased the rest out of Shayzar.

When Majd ad-Din, the governor of the castle of Aleppo, knew about the arrival of Nasrat ad-Din in Aleppo, he locked the castle's gates to keep him out. Many young men from Aleppo felt angry and said, "This is our crown prince and we should support him." They went to the gates and broke their locks. Nasrat ad-Din entered with his companions and settled in the city. Afterwards, some young men from Aleppo asked Nasrat ad-Din again to allow them to say in their *Adhan*, "Come to the best work! Come to Muhammad and `Ali, the best of all humans."[1] Nasrat ad-Din responded to their request and was kind to them. The governor of the castle sent a message to Nasrat ad-Din and the people of Aleppo saying, "Our master Nur ad-Din is still alive and there was no need to do so." Nur ad-Din, who had nearly recovered, condemned what had happened and said, "I forgive the young men and do not blame them for their slips, since their purpose was to support the crown prince." The glad tidings prevailed throughout all the countries that Nur ad-Din had recovered. As a result, people felt at ease after a state of anxiety and disturbance. Nur ad-Din's health began to improve and he urged the people to go back and fight against the Franks.

1. This innovated *Adhan* had been previously negated by Nur ad-Din when he came to Aleppo.

Chapter XXIV

Fort of Shayzar and the Rule of Banu Munqidh

[150] Ibn al-Athir said:

Shayzar was a fort near Hamah; the distance between them is about half a day's journey. It was one of the most invincible forts located on a high rock and its road was carved into the mountain. It was in the hands of Banu Munqidh who had inherited it successively since the days of Salih ibn Mirdas until the time of prince Abu al-Murhaf Nasr ibn `Ali ibn al-Maqlad ibn Nasr ibn Munqidh ibn Nasr ibn Hashim who inherited it from his father, Abu al-Hasan `Ali.

He, Abu al-Murhaf, remained in the fort until his death in 491 A.H. (1098 A.C.). He was courageous and used to fast and pray much. In his death throes, he chose his brother, prince Abu Salamah Murshid ibn `Ali, the father of Usamah, to be his successor. Abu Salamah refused and said, "By Allah! I have never been a governor and I will leave this world in the same way I came into it." Then he appointed his brother Abu al-`Asakir Sultan ibn `Ali as a ruler of the state of Banu Munqidh. His brother Abu al-`Asakir was younger than him and they remained on good terms for a long time. Abu Salamah Murshid had many male children who grew up and became leaders. Among them was `Izz ad-Dawlah Abu al-Hasan `Ali and Mu'ayyid ad-Dawlah Usamah ibn Murshid. Since Sultan then had no male children, he envied his brother and felt angry whenever he saw his grown-up nephews. Some evil men managed to sow the seeds of discord

between the two brothers. Hence, prince Sultan wrote poetry for his brother, Abu Salamah Murshid, in which he blamed him for something he had been informed about. Consequently, Abu Salamah replied with some meaningful lines. Both of them were great poets.

[151] Ibn al-Athir said:

When Abu Salamah passed away in 531 A.H. (1136 A.C.), prince Sultan showed hostility towards his nephews and attacked them. This was the case until he managed to overcome and force them out of Shayzar.

One of the main reasons behind driving them out was mentioned by Mu'ayyid ad-Dawlah Usamah ibn Murshid. "I had a good reputation of strength and intrepidness. When I was in Shayzar, someone told me that he had seen a wild lion in Dajlah. Thus, I mounted my horse, took my sword and headed out to kill that lion. I did not tell anyone about my intention so as not to let anyone stop me. When I approached the lion, I dismounted from my horse, tied it and walked towards the lion. When the lion saw me, it leapt abruptly on me, but I halved it with my sword. Then, I delivered the deathblow and put its head in my saddlebag, and returned to Shayzar. When I met my mother, I put the lion's head before her and told her the whole story. She said, 'O my son! Be ready to leave Shayzar. By Allah! Your uncle will never allow you or any of your brothers to stay here because of your courage and intrepidity.' The next day, my uncle ordered us to leave instantly. Hence, we dispersed in many countries."

They headed to king Nur ad-Din and complained about their uncle's mistreatment. Being busy in his *Jihad* against the Franks and being afraid that the Franks might capture Shayzar, king Nur ad-Din was unable to take vengeance from their uncle. So he asked them to

return to their homes. After the death of Prince Sultan, his sons succeeded him. Then king Nur ad-Din was informed about their alliance with the Franks. As a consequence they were greatly displeased, but he waited for the appropriate time to punish them. After the destruction of the castle in an earthquake, king Nur ad-Din attacked Shayzar and annexed it to his empire. He reconstructed its walls and restored it as if it had never been destroyed. Nur ad-Din did the same with the city of Hamah and all the Levantine provinces that had been devastated by that quake.

Chapter XXV

[152] When the Muslim camp proclaimed that the Franks had gathered and were marching toward them, king Nur ad-Din immediately prepared his army and the two parties began fighting. The Muslim army was about to lose when some of the Muslim leaders ran away from the battle. However, Nur ad-Din along with some of his intrepid soldiers and leaders remained firm and managed to kill a great number of the Franks and their horses. Being afraid that a Muslim ambush might be awaiting them, the Franks ran away defeated. Almighty Allah saved Nur ad-Din from them. Then Nur ad-Din returned safely with his companions to his tent. The Frankish king sent to Nur ad-Din asking him for a peace treaty. They exchanged a lot of messages in vain. Then, Nur ad-Din returned safely to Damascus.

[153] Abu al-Fath ibn Abi al-Hasan ibn al-Ashtari said:

We were informed that Nur ad-Din left to fight in the Cause of Allah in 556 A.H. (1161 A.C.) and that Allah predestined the defeat of

the Muslim army. King Nur ad-Din remained with a scanty group, standing on a hill. When the army of the disbelievers came nearer and mingled with the Muslims, the king stood opposite them directing his face towards the *Qiblah* and invoked Allah saying, "O Lord of the worshipers! I am a weak servant. You have invested me with this authority. I have constructed Your lands, advised Your slaves, asked them to do Your ordinance and to abstain from what Your prohibitions. I removed the mischief from among them and propagated the instructions of Your religion in their lands. Now the Muslims have been defeated and I cannot overcome those enemies of Your religion and of Your Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). I have nothing save my soul which I dedicated to defend Your religion and grant victory to Your Prophet (peace be upon him)." Allah answered his invocation and infused intimidation and disappointment in the hearts of his enemies who remained stuck in their places. The enemies wrongly thought that king Nur ad-Din had tricked them and that the Muslim troops were still waiting in ambush and that if they approached, they would all be killed. As a result, the enemies remained in their places and dared not to attack Nur ad-Din.

Were it not for Allah's Mercy, the disbelievers would have captured all the Muslim troops. Then two soldiers from the army of the disbelievers appeared and walked between the two lines asking for a duel between themselves and the Muslim soldiers. King Nur ad Din asked Khatlakh, the servant of 'Imad ad-Din Zangi, to go and duel with them. Khatlakh proceeded and managed to overcome them.

Sheikh Dawud al-Maqdisi stated:

The king of Jerusalem had previously granted me a mule which I mounted the day I was standing with king Nur ad-Din. When the disbelievers came nearer to us, my mule heard the sound of their

advance and began to bray. On hearing the sound of my mule, the disbelievers said, "This is Dawud riding his mule and standing with Nur ad-Din. Were it not for their trick and the ambushes of the Muslim soldiers, they would not be standing with such a scanty group." The disbelievers believed this and stopped not daring to proceed towards Nur ad-Din.

On account of what happened, the companions of king Nur ad-Din dismounted, kissed the earth below him and said, "O king! You are a shield of Islam in this position and in this province. What we will do if the Muslims become weak and the disbelievers try to capture them? Who will be able to prevent this?" When the disbelievers recognized that there was neither a trick nor an ambush, they felt great remorse.

Events of 558 A.H. (1163 A.C.)

[154] Ibn al-Athir said:

In this year king Nur ad-Din mobilized his troops and headed toward the provinces of the Franks. He settled in the fort of the Kurds intending to conquer the Franks and reside in Tripoli. While the soldiers were in their tents at midday, they were afraid upon seeing the crosses of the Franks behind the mountain on which the fort of the Kurds was established. The Muslims tried futilely to attack the Franks who fought back fiercely, killing and capturing many of the Muslim. Then some Frankish soldiers headed to the tent of king Nur ad-Din attempting to kill him. King Nur ad-Din escaped through the back door of his tent and mounted his horse. Because he was in such a hurry, king Nur ad-Din mounted his horse while the rope of the horse was tied to its feet. A Kurdish man noticed that and cut the rope of the

horse. As a result, Nur ad-Din was saved but the Kurd was killed. Nur ad-Din asked about the family of this Kurdish man and granted them many favors as a reward for the man's good deed.

Nur ad-Din marched to Hims and the survivors of the battle gathered around him. One of his companions said, "You should not stay here as the Franks may attack us in this miserable situation." Nur ad-Din rebuked him, and said, "Even if I have a thousand warriors, I will never care if they become more or less in number. By Allah! I will not sit in the shade until I take vengeance for Islam."

Afterwards, he sent some of his companions to Aleppo and Damascus so as to obtain money, animals, arms, tents, and all that the soldiers needed. Nur ad-Din distributed these items among the survivors. As for those persons who had been killed in the battle, Nur ad-Din decided to give their shares to their children. If they did not have any offspring their shares would be given to their relatives.

The Franks resolved to march to Hims, the nearest place to them. However, when they were informed that Nur ad-Din was there, they said, "Undoubtedly, Nur ad-Din would never do that unless he has enough power to prevent us from entering Hims."

[155] Nur ad-Din (may Allah's Mercy be upon him) increased his gifts and grants to the extent that he distributed two hundred thousand dinars in one day along with animals, tents, weapons, etc. He went to his divan and asked his men to bring the soldiers. Then, he asked each one of them about the things lost or stolen by the Franks during the battle so as to compensate them. Hence, each soldier was compensated for the things he claimed. One soldier claimed more than his right. Being aware that the soldier was lying, Nur ad-Din's representatives sent a message to Nur ad-Din informing him about the matter and asking him

for permission to make the soldier swear for his claim. However, Nur ad-Din refused and said, "Do not spoil our grants for I need reward and requital behind granting much or little."

[156] His companions told him, "You grant so much in your country for the jurisprudents, the poor, the ascetics and the memorizers of the Noble Qur'an. It would be much better if you make use of these grants." Nur ad-Din was infuriated and said, "By Allah! I beseech Allah's Victory through those people. Your Lord provides you with the means of subsistence and grants you His Victory due to the weak among you. So how can I deprive them of their grants while they fight for me with their arrows which never miss, and grant their shares to people who fight for me with their arrows which might hit or miss. Such persons also have their shares in the treasury." When they heard this they kept silent.

Afterwards, the Franks sent a message to Nur ad-Din asking him for a truce, but he did not respond to their demand. Then, they assigned some soldiers to defend the fort and returned home.

Events of 559 A.H. (1164 A.C.)

[157] In this year Asad ad Din Shirkuh ibn Shadhi, a prominent prince, marched to Egypt for the first time. He resolved to control the Egyptian lands and annex it to his kingdom. Asad ad-Din was the eldest of Shadhi's Kurdish sons. Both he and his brother Najm ad-Din Ayyub came to Iraq and served Mujahid ad-Din Bahruz al-Khadim who was the ruler of Iraq. On seeing the prudence and good conduct of Najm ad-Din, Mujahid ad-Din made him the ruler of Tikrit. Then,

Najm ad-Din marched with his brother Asad ad-Din to that city. After the defeat of Zangi, the father of Nur ad-Din, in Iraq in 526 A.H. (1132 A.C.), he reached Tikrit where Najm ad-Din helped him by setting up some ships for him. As a result, Zangi crossed the Tigris River and his companions followed him later on. Najm ad-Din treated them kindly and gave them some instructions.

Afterwards, Asad ad-Din killed a Christian at Tikrit because of a dispute that erupted between them. Consequently, Mujahid ad-Din sent for him and his brother Najm ad-Din and ordered them to leave the city. Also, it was said that Ayyub was a good archer and that he shot dead one of Bahruz's servants. Fearing the consequences, Ayyub headed to the Levant and worked with Zangi. It was also said that when Asad ad-Din killed the Christian who was much loved by Bahruz, he ran away to Mosul and Ayyub followed him. Ayyub and Shirkuh went to Zangi who treated them kindly. Nur ad-Din granted them good fiefs and they became among his best soldiers. After his conquest of the fort of Ba`labak, Zangi appointed Najm ad-Din as the ruler of the fort. After the death of Zangi, the army of Damascus besieged Najm ad-Din who at once sent a message to Sayf ad-Din Ghazi, who succeeded his father, to inform him about the status quo. Sayf ad-Din was busy and did not pay any attention to Ba`labak. The people there were unable to cope with the siege imposed by the army of Damascus, and Najm ad-Din feared they might take the city of Ba`labak by force and that he might be harmed. In consequence, Najm ad-Din sent a message to the ruler of Damascus in order to hand in the castle and take instead a piece of land that he had previously asked for. The ruler of Damascus responded to his demand, promised he would give him what he wanted, and fulfilled his pledge concerning the fief and leadership. Then, Najm ad-Din became one of the rulers of Damascus and its prominent princes.

Following Zangi's death, Asad ad-Din joined Nur ad-Din who gave him great favors and granted him lands. When Nur ad-Din recognized the unique courage of Asad ad-Din and his skills in wars, he increased his grants and favors on him until he got Hims, ar-Rahbah, and other provinces. He also made him the leader of his armies. When Nur ad-Din wanted to have Damascus, he asked Asad ad-Din who at once sent a message to his brother Najm ad-Din seeking his help to conquer Damascus. Najm ad-Din responded to the demand of his brother and both of them asked Nur ad-Din for more lands and property in Damascus and in other provinces. Nur ad-Din granted all their demands after they managed to conquer the city. Both of them became high ranking, especially Najm ad-Din who used to sit down without the permission of Nur ad-Din.

[158] In 559 A.H. (1164 A.C.), Nur ad-Din resolved to send his armies to Egypt. He was convinced that no one could do this mission except Asad ad-Din because of his intrepidity. Hence, he asked Asad ad-Din to march out to Egypt. The main reason behind Nur ad-Din's resolution to send his armies to Egypt was his desire to help Shawar ibn Mujir Abu Shuja` as Sa`di who was known as "The Prince of Armies", and about whom `Imarah said:

Iron has worn out, but Shawar
In aiding Muhammad's clan, does never tire.
Time has sworn to get his compeer,
Yet this task is definitely dear.

Shawar was the vizier of the successor who was known as al-`Adid Li Din Allah, the last of the successors[1] in Egypt. Shawar reached

1 Namely one of those successors who were wrongly called the Fatimids.

Damascus on the 6th of Rabi` al-Awwal, 558 A.H. (1163 A.C.) and asked Nur ad-Din to help him restore his position that had been taken from him by force. There was a prevalent custom among the Egyptians to help the helpless people restore their lost positions immediately.

Before that Shawar had predominated and deposed Ruzzik from the ministry and killed al-`Adil ibn as-Salah ibn Ruzzik who became a minister after the death of his father. Besides, he summoned Judge al-Fadil `Abd ar-Rahim ibn `Ali from Alexandria and made good use of him in favor of the Egyptian troops. Prince Dirgham ibn Sawad rebelled against Shawar and gathered huge throngs to depose him. Dirgham overcame Shawar, made him leave Cairo and took hold of the ministry. Thus, Shawar headed to the Levant to king Nur ad-Din asking for his help and Nur ad-Din in turn received him hospitably. He asked Nur ad-Din to send his troops to Egypt to support him in return for a share in Egypt; in addition, he promised that he would follow his instructions in ruling. Nur ad-Din then invoked Allah for proper guidance in this matter and ordered Asad ad-Din to march with Shawar to Egypt.

Asad ad-Din prepared his troops and marched with Shawar in Jumada al-Akhirah, 559 A.H. (1164 A.C.). Nur ad-Din ordered Asad ad-Din to let Shawar restore his previous position and to take vengeance from those who had contended with him in the ministry. Asad ad-Din arrived safely in Egypt with his soldiers. When Shawar's antagonist came to know about that he fled; but the soldiers chased and killed him. Shawar restored his position as a vizier and became firmly established in that position.

[159] Ibn al-Athir said:

Asad ad-Din settled in the outskirts of Cairo. However, Shawar betrayed Asad ad-Din and broke his promise to Nur ad-Din and Asad

ad-Din, concerning their shares of the Egyptian lands according to the previous agreement. As a result, Nur ad-Din sent for Asad ad-Din asking him to return to the Levant. Asad ad-Din refused and once again asked Shawar for what they had agreed upon, but Shawar did not respond.

Accordingly, Asad ad-Din sent his forces to take hold of the city of Bilbis and managed to dominate the eastern cities. Shawar sent for the Franks asking for reinforcement and warned them that Nur ad-Din might succeed to control Egypt. The Franks, who were quite sure that had Nur ad-Din taken control of Egypt, they would have been extirpated, prepared their troops with the wealth that Shawar had sent them, and rushed to answer his call.

When he was informed that the Franks had equipped themselves to march to Egypt, Nur ad-Din marched with his troops to the borders of his lands that were close to the Franks so as to prevent them from marching. The Franks left some warriors to defend their countries and the rest marched with the king of Jerusalem to Egypt. Meanwhile, an enormous amount of the Franks arrived at the coast to visit Jerusalem. The king of Jerusalem, therefore, asked for their help and they responded to his request. Some of them marched with him to Egypt and the rest remained to defend the province.

The Egyptian and the Frankish troops marched towards Asad ad-Din who sought protection in the city of Bilbis that was surrounded by a short wall made of clay. They failed to defeat him and besieged him there for three months. Asad ad-Din continued to fight against them day and night, and still they could not overcome him. During the battle, the Franks were informed that another group of the Franks had been defeated at Harim and that Nur ad-Din had controlled the fort and had marched to Baniyas. Hearing that, the Franks became confused

and wished to return so as to protect their lands and catch Nur ad-Din before he took hold of Baniyas.

Thus, the Franks corresponded with Asad ad-Din seeking reconciliation with him. This reconciliation stipulated that they would return to the Levant, and that he should deliver all that he had taken from the Egyptian lands back to the Egyptians. Being unaware of what Nur ad- Din had done with the Franks at the coast, Asad ad-Din answered all their demands.

[160] Ibn al-Athir said:

Someone who saw Asad ad-Din leaving Bilbis told me, "I saw him, namely Asad ad-Din, letting his companions pass before him and standing at the back of the army to cover their back. Both the Muslims and the Franks were watching this. Then, one of the Franks came to Asad ad-Din and asked him, 'Would you not fear the betrayal of those Muslims while the Franks are near to you?' Asad ad-Din answered, 'If they do so, you will see what you have never seen before. By Allah! I will fight the Franks to the extent that I will not die until I kill as many as I can. Then king Nur ad-Din comes to capture their territories and kills those who survived. By Allah! If they (i.e. his companions) obeyed me I would have come the following day to fight you, but they refused to do so." As a result, the Frankish man signed the cross over his face and said, 'We used to question the Franks who exaggerated when describing you and your power. But now we excuse them since they were right.' Then the Frankish man went back and Shirkuh marched and returned safely to the Levant.

Chapter XXVI

The Conquest of Harim

[161] Al-`Imad said

It was in this year, namely 559 A.H. (1164 A.C.), that Nur ad-Din seized the opportunity and attacked the Levant that contained a small amount of Frankish troops. At Harim, the two parties, the Muslims and the Franks, began fighting. The Almighty enabled Nur ad-Din to take vengeance from the Franks; he killed and captured a large number of them. Among the Frankish captives was the prince of Antioch, the priest of Tripoli, Ibn Lajuslin and the duke of Rome. This event took place during the month of Ramadan.

[162] Ibn al-Athir said:

The major cause behind this conquest was that Nur ad-Din, when he returned empty-handed from the battle of the fort of the Kurds, exerted great efforts and prepared properly for *Jihad*. He decided to take his vengeance and invade his enemies on their own territory. For this reason he corresponded with his brother Qutb ad-Din at Mosul, Fakhr ad-Din Qara Arslan at al-Hisn, Najm ad-Din Albi at Mardin, and some other leaders.

Qutb ad-Din Atabeg mobilized his troops and hastened with his deputy Zayn ad-Din. Fakhr ad-Din Arslan's close friends asked him, "What do you intend to do?" Fakhr ad-Din answered, "I will stay here, as Nur ad-Din has become weak due to his frequent prayers and fasting. Nur ad-Din is destroying himself and his followers." All the

attendants agreed with Fakhr ad-Din's view, yet the following day Fakhr ad-Din called the troops to prepare to invade the enemies. Those who had previously agreed with his view wondered, "Yesterday we agreed upon a certain view and today we see the opposite." Fakhr ad-Din said, 'Nur ad-Din followed a certain course of action with me. If I did not follow that course, my followers would disobey and rebel against me. Nur ad-Din corresponded with the pious and the ascetics reminding them of what the Franks had done to Muslims like killing, capturing, and plundering. Nur ad-Din asked them to supplicate Almighty Allah and appealed to them to urge the Muslims to go for *Jihad.* As a result, they sat with his followers and companions and began to read Nur ad Din's letters while weeping, cursing, and imprecating me. Hence, I have to answer Nur ad-Din's call." After that Fakhr ad-Din prepared and marched toward Nur ad-Din.

Najm ad-Din marched his soldiers to Nur ad-Din. When he mobilized his troops, Nur ad-Din marched to Harim where he settled and besieged it. The Franks, who had been informed that Nur ad-Din did not march to Egypt, mobilized their troops. Then the ruler of Antioch, the priest of Tripoli, Ibn Lajuslin, and the duke of Rome joined the Frankish troops. Nur ad-Din urged his troops on and distributed the most precious items among his most intrepid men. When the Franks approached him, Nur ad-Din left Harim and went to Artah to make its people follow him, hoping he would be able to overcome and subdue them. The Franks marched until they settled in `Amm. Being aware of their powerlessness and their inability to fight against Nur ad-Din, the Franks returned to Harim and Nur ad-Din followed them.

When the two parties met, they began to fight and the Franks were the first to attack the right flank of the Muslim army that included the

troops of Aleppo. The Franks forced the Muslims to disperse and escape. Running away from the battlefield, on the Muslims part, was agreed upon and was a part of their scheme for it was meant to make the Frankish knights chase the Muslims here and there while the rest of the Muslims would attack the infantry. When the Frankish knights came back directly after pursuing the Muslim troops of the right flank, they would not find even a single infantryman. At that time the Muslims would pounce upon them, and this is exactly what happened.

When the Franks followed the defeated Muslims of the right flank, Zayn ad-Din and the troops of Mosul attacked the Frankish infantrymen and killed and captured many. When the Frankish knights returned, they found that some of their infantrymen were covered with dust and blood. Thereupon, the Franks were horrified and the Muslims encircled them. The battle became fierce and the Muslim troops fought bravely and pounced upon them like hawks attacking easy preys. Unable to escape, the Franks surrendered. The Muslim troops killed a great number of the Frankish knights, more than ten thousand during the battle. The number of Frankish captives was unknown; but it is enough to know that all the Frankish leaders were captured.

After his victory over the Franks, Nur ad-Din marched to Harim of which he took control on the 21st of Ramadan. On seeing that Antioch had no protection, Nur ad-Din's companions advised him to march and capture it. Nur ad-Din, however, did not listen to their advice and said, "As for Antioch, it will be easy to get hold of. Yet, the castle of the city is invincible and requires a long siege in order to take hold of it. If we besiege the people of Antioch, they will send for the ruler of Constantinople to give him the castle. Yet, the neighborhood of Baymand, the Frankish ruler of Antioch, is better than that of the king of Rome." Hence, Nur ad-Din scattered his brigades throughout these

provinces and states where they gained many spoils and captives and returned safely.

Afterwards, Nur ad-Din released Baymand in return for a great ransom and the release of a large number of Muslim captives.

[163] Al-Hafizh Abu al-Qasim said:

It was at Harim that Nur ad-Din overcame the Romans and the Franks in spite of their huge number, about thirty thousand soldiers. Nur ad-Din captured Baymand during the disaster of Harim, but he released him for a great ransom that Nur ad Din later spent on *Jihad*.

[164] I was informed that Nur ad-Din (may Allah's mercy be upon him), immediately before the encounter of the two parties, secluded himself under the hill of Harim, prostrated to the Almighty and invoked Him, "O my Lord! Those (the Muslims) are Your servants, and those (the Franks) are Your enemies. O my Lord! Grant your servants victory over Your enemies."

[165] Also, I was told that Nur ad-Din said, "Oh Allah! Grant victory to Your religion not to me! Who is that dog Mahmud [referring to himself] to be honored with Your victory?!"

[166] Ibn al-Athir said:

In Sha`ban 559 A.H. (1164 A.C.), the vizier Jamal ad-Din ibn Abu Mansur al-Asfahani died. He had served Zangi, the father of Nur ad-Din, who made him ruler over Nasibayn. Recognizing his competence and honesty, Zangi appointed Jamal ad-Din as ruler over ar-Rahbah and Nasibayn. Then, he made him the supervisor of his entire kingdom and made him of a high rank and position. Then, Jamal ad-Din continued to be a vizier of Zangi's two sons, Sayf ad-Din and Qutb ad-Din.

[167] During Jamal ad-Din's reign, Mosul was a shelter for all those who were aggrieved and a refuge for all those who were afraid. Some envious people incited Qutb ad-Din against Jamal ad-Din; they told him that Jamal ad-Din had taken some of Qutb ad-Din's wealth and had given them in charity. Thus, Qutb ad-Din arrested Jamal ad-Din and imprisoned him in the castle of Mosul. He remained in prison for about one year after which he fell ill and passed away. Jamal ad-Din was a great and unique man. We have not heard of a person who is as open-hearted and generous as Jamal ad-Din. He was magnanimous and openhanded.

[168] Ibn al-Athir said:

I was told that the ascetic sheikh Abu al-Qasim, one of the righteous people who were serving Jamal ad-Din in prison, said, "Jamal was worried about his last day throughout the period of his imprisonment until his death and he used to say, 'I was afraid to meet Allah while I am a vizier.' When he fell ill, he told me, 'O Abu al-Qasim! If you see a white bird coming to the house, then let me know.' I said to myself, 'The man is mentally ill.' But in the early morning Jamal ad-Din asked me about the bird more than once. Finally a white bird that I have never seen before came into the house. When I told Jamal ad-Din about the bird, he regarded this as a sign and said, 'Right has come to light.' Then he uttered the two testimonies and passed away. At the moment of his death, the white bird flew away."

Jamal ad-Din was buried in Mosul for about one year. Before his death, he told sheikh Abu al-Qasim, "There is a word between me and Asad ad-Din Shirkuh. It stipulates that if any of us dies before the other, it will be necessary for the living one to carry the dead and bury him in Medina. So, when I pass away, you should go to Asad ad-Din and remind him about that." Consequently, after his death, sheikh Abu

al-Qasim went to Asad ad-Din for this purpose. Asad ad Din gave Abu al-Qasim a large sum of money to move Jamal ad-Din to Medina Asad ad-Din asked some people to recite the Ever-Glorious Qur'an before his coffin and some others to call for the funeral prayer when passing by a city on their way to Medina. They fulfilled his instruction and great gatherings of people in every city they reached, prayed for him. When the body of Jamal ad-Din was at al-Hilla (a city in Iraq) and people congregated for the prayer, a young man ascended a high place and proclaimed:

His coffin is now on the shoulders born,
His benevolence to the ends of the earth has flown;
His praise is the cry of the trodden stone,
And the society's widows' groan.

There had never been such weeping as on the day of Jamal ad-Din's death. The people circumambulated the Ka`bah carrying his body and offered the funeral prayer for him. Then they carried him to Medina, prayed for him again and buried him in a tomb that he, Jamal ad-Din, had prepared for himself there. The distance between him and the Prophet's (peace be upon him) tomb is fifteen cubits.

[169] He then said:

Jamal ad Din (may Allah have mercy upon him) was the most generous, the kindest, and the most just person among the people. One of his most noble deeds was that he renovated the mosque of al-Khayf in Mina; he spent a great amount of money to do that. In addition, he built al-Hijr beside the Ka`bah and I saw his name inscribed on it. He had the Ka`bah inlaid with gold. Before doing so, Jamal ad-Din sent a precious gift to the Abbasid caliph Muhammad ibn Ahmad and sent

grand robes and many gifts to `Isa Hashim, the governor of Mecca, in order to take permission to inlay the Ka`bah with gold.

Also, Jamal ad-Din reconstructed the mosque located on Mount `Arafat and set up the stairs that lead to it. He set up water tanks at `Arafat and spent a lot of money to make water flow into them from Na`man[1] beneath Mount `Arafat. He used to give the people of Na`man great sums of money yearly in order that they let the water flow into the tanks at the time the pilgrims were at `Arafat.

[170] He added:

Another of the great and useful deeds of Jamal ad-Din was that he built a wall around Medina. When the city was without a wall, the Bedouins used to mess about and plunder it causing a lot of troubles to its people.

I saw a person performing the Friday prayer and when he finished his prayers he invoked Allah to have mercy upon Jamal ad-Din. When we asked him why he made that prayer for Jamal ad-Din, the man said, "It is an obligation on the dwellers of Medina to pray for Jamal ad-Din. We were being harmed, we were needy and worried because of the Bedouins who used not to leave us anything to satisfy our hunger. He, Jamal ad-Din, built a wall to protect us against those who wanted to harm us. So, why should we not pray for him?"

The preacher of the Friday prayer in Medina said in his sermon, "O Allah! Protect the one who protected Your Prophet's sanctuary with a wall (i.e. Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn Abi Mansur[2]) and all his family."

1. It is a city between Mecca and at-Ta'if.

2. It refers to Jamal ad-Din

If this had been his only noble deed, it would have been sufficient to bestow great honor on him. But he used to spend in the Cause of Allah at all times and in all places. The person entrusted with Jamal ad-Din's charity and endowments said, "At his home, Jamal ad-Din used to grant a hundred dinars daily." He also used to give the poor continuous charity. One of his wonderful constructions that people had never seen before was the bridge that he built with carved stones, iron, lead and lime near ibn `Umar's island. However, Jamal ad-Din died before he was able to finish this work. He also built many dormitories in many cities such as Mosul, Sinjar[1], Nasibayn, etc. Many people, such as leaders, scholars and Sufis, from many countries used to stay in these residences. During his life-time, Mosul was a destination for many people.

[171] One of his favorite deeds was giving charity. He and his household used to give out things to the poor and needy. My father said to me, "One day while I was visiting Jamal ad-Din, a beaver was brought to him in order to make a robe out of its fur. The price of the beaver was five dinars. Thus, Jamal ad-Din said, 'This price is too high. Get me a beaver that costs two dinars only and give the other three in charity.' We tried to persuade him to buy that beaver, but he refused."

[172] He added:

A man whom I trust from Mosul told me that once provisions became scarce and the prices increased. At Mosul, there was a righteous man called `Umar al-Malla. Jamal ad-Din summoned this man, gave him a sum of money and said, "Distribute this money among the needy." Jamal ad-Din used to send other sums of money as soon as the money he had previously sent was distributed. Due to the

1. It is a city near Mosul.

great number of needy people, all the sums of money were distributed in few days only. No sooner had Jamal ad-Din sent another sum of money, than it was consumed quickly. Sheikh `Umar sent a messenger to Jamal ad-Din to ask him for more money. Jamal ad-Din answered the messenger, "By Allah! I have nothing to give, but you can take the tools that are in my house and sell them, and distribute their prices among the needy until I get some more money to send to Sheikh `Umar." Sheikh `Umar did that and sent his messenger to Jamal ad-Din once again. Having nothing to give to the messenger, Jamal ad-Din took off his clothes and gave them to `Umar's messenger and said, "Tell sheikh `Umar that he should not give up asking for money; as these days are days of consolation." When the messenger gave the clothes of Jamal ad-Din to sheikh `Umar, he (sheikh `Umar) burst into tears; then he sold them and granted their prices to the needy.

[173] He went on saying:

a Sufi who was a friend of sheikh `Umar an-Nasa'i, the grand sheikh of Mosul, said, "Sheikh `Umar an-Nasa'i summoned me and said, 'Go to the mosque of al-Wazir (at Mosul) and stay there. If you receive anything, you should keep it until I come.' I did what he asked me to do. Then a group of porters came carrying a lot of things. After that Jamal ad-Din's deputy came with sheikh `Umar while they had a lot of clothes, eighteen thousand dinars, and a large number of camels. The deputy ordered me saying, 'Take these loads and march to ar-Rahbah to deliver this package and this book to the ruler there. Then if the Arab so-and-so comes to you, give him this other package and this book and so on until you reach Medina where you must deliver these loads, clothing, and money to my deputy so and so who will disperse it according to this list. Then, he will take the rest and march to Mecca where my deputy will distribute it according to this

list.' So, we marched till we reached the valley of al-Qura. There we saw some men leading one hundred camels carrying food stuff to Medina; but they feared the dangers of the road. When they saw us, they traveled with us to Medina. When we arrived, the people were selling one *Sa'* of wheat for two Egyptian dinars. When the dwellers of Medina saw that each seven *Sa'*s cost only one dinar, they began to pray for Jamal ad-Din. Then we marched to Medina and did what we had been ordered."

[174] He added:

My father told me, "I saw Jamal ad-Din before becoming a vizier when a needy jurisprudent was there asking him for something. The jurisprudent went frequently to Jamal ad-Din and then refrained from going. Jamal ad-Din then, asked about him. When the people informed him that the man had traveled, he was angry and asked again about his destination. When the people told him that the man had traveled to Mardin, Jamal ad-Din sent him clothing and expenses."

If I wanted to explain Jamal ad-Din's noble deeds, it would surely take a long time.

[175] In his book *Al-I'tibar*, prince Usamah ibn Munqidh mentioned Jamal ad-Din many times. He said, "I met Jamal ad-Din of Mosul in 555 A.H. (1160 A.C.) while I was on my way to perform *Hajj*. We had been close friends for a long time. He invited me to his house at Mosul but I refused and stayed in my tent on the riverbank. Throughout my residence there, Jamal ad-Din used to mount his horse, pass the bridge towards Ninoy and send me a messenger to tell me that he was waiting for me. Then I would mount my horse and travel to him. We used to discuss various matters. One day, when I found him alone, I said to him, 'There is something that I want to tell

you, but I never found the proper time. Now you are alone so I can tell you.' Jamal ad-Din asked me to speak. I said, 'I will quote the words of ash-Sharif ar-Radi:

It's only through the friendly terms,
That I brick your conscience with hints,
My feelings for you prevents me
From leaving you go astray.

You have spent a lot of money on charity, the ways of goodness and favor while sultans find it difficult to spend money even if they spend it out of their own inheritance. This is what caused the fall of the Barmakid dynasty. So you should consider the matter and find an outlet!'

As a result, Jamal ad-Din kept silent for a while and said, 'May Allah reward you for this advice; but your advice expressed your fear.' I left him and traveled to al Hijaz. Afterwards, Jamal ad-Din was imprisoned and he died there."

[176] Ibn al-Athir said:

My father said, "During the time of `Imad ad-Din Zangi, Jamal ad-Din was competent; he used to consider all small and great matters. When Jamal ad-Din was the vizier of Qutb ad-Din Mawdud ibn Atabeg, he - in spite of his competence and proficiency - would neglect many small matters. One day I asked him, 'Where is the competence that we used to see during the times of `Imad ad-Din Zangi?'

Jamal ad-Din answered, 'Am I now incompetent?' I said, 'What you are doing now compared to that during the time of `Imad ad-Din

has nothing to do with competence.' Jamal ad-Din said, 'You are naive. Competence is not a single action throughout all times; rather, it means that man should follow and behave according to the demands of the age in which he lives. Our ruler, during the last period, was a prudent and strong-willed man and no one dared to protest against him or make a small mistake; furthermore, he depended upon me and did not listen to gossip. So, I respected him and did all I could. Our recent ruler, however, is a fickled, unfit and subservient man. Hence, what I am doing now is also based on competence.'"

Events of 560 A.H. (1165 A.C.)

[177] Ibn al-Athir said:

"In this year, Nur ad-Din conquered the castle of Baniyas which was being controlled by the Franks. When he returned from Harim, he gave permission to the troops of Mosul and Diyar Bakr to return home. Then, he acted as if he wanted to conquer Tiberias. In so doing, Nur ad-Din made the Franks think that his sole desire was to defend and protect the Tiberias. Thus, he marched to the castle of Baniyas and found a small number of the Franks there. He besieged it and fought against its inhabitants.

[178] Among Nur ad-Din's soldiers was his brother Nasrat ad-Din. During the battle, he lost one of his eyes by an arrow. When Nur ad-Din saw what happened he addressed him, "Dear brother! If you know your reward in the Hereafter, then you will wish to lose the other one."

[179] Nur ad-Din had exerted a great effort in besieging the castle of Baniyas On knowing that, the Franks began to gather themselves, but their equipment was insufficient. They had become weak due to the fact that their troops were either killed or captured at Harim. As a result, Nur ad-Din took control of the castle and filled it with supplies, weapons, and soldiers. Then, he returned to Damascus while he was wearing a ring with a gem made of the most precious rubies. The gem of the ring fell somewhere in the jungle of Baniyas which was full of trees and bushes. When they had traveled far from the jungle, Nur ad-Din realized that he had lost the gem. Hence, he asked some of his men to go and search for it in a certain place in the jungle. When the men went to the place which Nur ad-Din had specified, they found the gem of the ring and returned it to him.

[180] When Musa al-Hadi became caliph, he asked about a precious ring that belonged to his father. He was informed that his brother ar-Rashid had taken it. Thus, he asked ar-Rashid for the ring, but he refused to give it to him. When he saw that his brother insisted on taking the ring, ar-Rashid was furious; he crossed the bridge of Baghdad and threw the ring into the Tigris River. When Musa died and ar-Rashid became caliph, he came to the place in which the precious ring had been thrown and threw a ring of lead. Then, he asked the divers to search for the lead ring. The divers, however, found the first ring and this was thought to be a good omen concerning his reign."

[181] Ibn al-Athir said:

When Nur ad-Din conquered Baniyas, the son of Mu`in ad-Din, who handed Baniyas to the Franks, was beside Nur ad-Din. Nur ad-Din looked at him and said, "The people are pleased with this conquest only once but you will be pleased twice." When the son of Mu`in ad-Din

asked about the reason, Nur ad-Din replied, "Today Allah, the Almighty, may have mercy upon your father."

Events of 561 A.H. (1166 A.C.)

[182] In this year, Nur ad-Din marched to the fort of al-Munaytirah that was under the control of the Franks. He did not gather many troops so as to prevent the Franks from realizing his intention. However, the Franks came to know about that and gathered their troops to defend the fort. Nur ad-Din marched to al-Munaytirah, besieged it, fought against its troops and conquered it. Nur ad-Din killed many troops and gained great spoils. The troops of Nur ad-Din managed to take the Franks by surprise. They were unable to defend the fort and so Nur ad-Din got hold of it. If the Franks knew that Nur ad-Din had a small number of troops, they would have rushed to attack him. Thus, when he captured the fort, the Franks dispersed and lost hope of ever retrieving it.

Events of 562 A.H. (1167 A.C.)

[183] In this year, Asad ad-Din returned to Egypt on the 9th of Rabi` al-Akhir. Asad ad-Din was still inclined to go back and conquer Egypt. He used to reveal this to the people whom he trusted. Among the reasons that motivated Asad ad-Din to return to Egypt was his increasing spite against Shawar because of what he had done to him. In 562 A.H. (1167 A.C.), Asad ad-Din equipped himself and marched

to Egypt. Nur ad-Din asked a group of his princes and his nephew Saladin Yusuf ibn Ayyub to march with Asad ad-Din to Egypt.

[184] Then Asad ad Din marched until he reached the territories belonging to the Egyptians. There he resided in Giza, beside Old Cairo, and remained there for about fifty-four days. At that time, Shawar, who had been informed about the arrival of Asad ad-Din, sent a message to the Franks asking them for help and support. The Franks immediately responded to Shawar's demand; their greed to control Egypt had incited them to exert a great effort. Besides, their fear that the troops of Nur ad-Din might get hold of Egypt urged them to hasten in their march. Hope and fear drove them onward.

[185] When the Franks reached Egypt, they crossed over to the western side. Meanwhile, Asad ad-Din and Nur ad-Din's troops were marching to Upper Egypt where they reached a place known as al-Banin. The Egyptian and the Frankish troops followed them and managed to overtake them on the 24^{th} of Jumada al-Ula. It happened that Asad ad-Din had sent spies to the Egyptian and the Frankish troops. They returned and told him about their great numbers and their desire to capture him. As a result, Asad ad-Din resolved to fight them; yet, he feared that his soldiers might lose their steadfastness because of their small number and the great distance between them and their home. Asad ad-Din consulted his men who unanimously agreed that they should cross the Nile to the eastern bank and return to the Levant. They asked, "If we are defeated - a matter about which there is no doubt - then where will we take shelter and to whom will we resort? We are surrounded by our enemies and they will attack us. It is natural that we are worried because our army consists of only two thousand warriors, who are far from their homes and have no supporters, and we are expected to confront an army of tens of thousands!"

When they had said that, one of Nur ad-Din's soldiers called Sharaf ad-Din Burghush, who was well-known for his bravery stood up and said, "He who fears being killed, injured or captured should not work and serve the king, but to be either a peasant or to stay with women at home. By Allah! If you return to the king without victory or an inexcusable defeat, he will take your property. Moreover, he will reproach you saying, 'Do you take the money of the Muslims so as to run away from your enemies and hand the Egyptian lands to the disbelievers?'" Asad ad-Din said, "This is my opinion and I will act upon it." Saladin Yusuf ibn Ayyub agreed with them. Then a great number agreed with them until they all decided to confront the disbelievers. Afterwards, Asad ad-Din remained in his place waiting for the Egyptian and Frankish troops. He put the luggage in the centre of the army so that it would not be plundered; if he put it in another place, it might be stolen by the Egyptians. Then he put his nephew Saladin in the centre of the army and told him and his fellows, "The Egyptians and the Franks think that I am in the center. Consequently, they will concentrate their strikes towards that part. So when they begin to attack you, do not fight them seriously; do not ruin yourselves and rush among them. When they retreat, you should chase them."

Asad ad-Din chose from among his troops, a group known for their patience and bravery and stood with them at the right flank of the army. When the two parties started fighting, the Franks did exactly what Asad ad-Din had expected. They thought that Asad ad-Din was in the centre of the army; thus, they attacked it but the defenders fought back and overcame them. Asad ad-Din then, attacked, along with his men, the rest of the Franks who were attacking the centre of his army. The Muslims began to strike the Franks severely and they killed, captured, and defeated the rest of them. When the other Frankish troops came after their friends who had attacked the centre of the Muslim army, they

did not find them in the battlefield. Having no supporters, they were defeated. The defeat of the Egyptian and Frankish troops at the hands of only two thousand Muslim warriors was a wonderful incident.

Then Asad ad-Din marched to Alexandria and on his way he collected money from the villages and hamlets that he passed by. On reaching Alexandria, its people surrendered the city to him peacefully. Asad ad-Din made his nephew Saladin ruler over Alexandria. He went back to Upper Egypt where he got hold of it, collected money, and remained there until the end of Ramadan.

[186] The Egyptians and the Franks went to Cairo where they gathered their men, compensated the families of those who had been killed among them, and marched to Alexandria. Saladin was there with his troops to defend the city against the Franks. The inhabitants of Alexandria, who feared the Franks, supported Saladin and his soldiers. Yet, the Franks besieged Alexandria and thus food became scarce; but the people of Alexandria endured that patiently. Then, Asad ad-Din came from Upper Egypt and marched to help them. The messenger of both the Franks and the Egyptians reached Asad ad Din asking him for reconciliation and they offered to pay him fifty thousand dinars along with what he had taken from the Egyptians. Asad ad-Din accepted their offer, but stipulated that the Franks were neither to stay in Egypt nor to take a single Egyptian village. Also, they should return Alexandria to its people. They accepted his conditions and reconciled with him. Then Asad ad-Din returned to the Levant where he reached Damascus on the 18th of Dhu al-Qa`dah.

[187] The Franks reconciled with the Egyptians on the following conditions; they would have a Frankish deputy in Egypt; the Frankish troops would control the Egyptian gates so as to prevent the troops of

Nur ad-Din from entering Egypt; and the Franks would take one hundred thousand dinars yearly from Egypt. This agreement took place only between Shawar and the Franks.

Al-`Adid, the ruler of Egypt, was unaware of all that had taken place, so he was not able to control anything. Shawar passed a sentence upon him and removed him from his position. The Franks returned to their homes and left in Egypt, especially in Cairo, some of their warriors and prominent leaders, due to their agreement with Shawar. Then Shawar's son, al-Kamil Shuja` sent a message to Nur ad-Din confirming his loyalty and asking him to reform the present conditions, commanding the Egyptian people to obey him and unify the Muslims. In addition, he sent him a great sum of money. This was the case until the Franks came again to capture Egypt.

Events of 564 A.H. (1169 A.C.)

[188] In this year, Egypt was conquered. Asad ad-Din marched to Egypt for the third time. He defeated his enemies, killed Shawar and succeeded him in the ministry. After Asad ad-Din's death, his nephew, Saladin, succeeded him.

The Franks, during the first two times in which Shawar asked them for help and support against Asad ad-Din, were quite aware of the conditions the Egyptians had made and their great significance; thus, they dreamt of taking control of it. Their greed incited them to seize Egypt and break their commitment with Asad ad-Din. They gathered their soldiers and said, "There are no defenders in Egypt to resist us. If we wished to besiege it, no one would prevent us from

doing so ... Nur ad-Din is in the Northern territories at the Euphrates River. The soldiers of the Levant are scattered here and there, each in his own province to defend it. We can rush to Egypt and take no time to besiege it since it has no forts and its dwellers have no supporters to resort to. Before the arrival of the soldiers of the Levant, we would achieve our goal.'

Thus, they marched to Egypt and acted as though they would march to Hims. Some Egyptians, who were opposing Shawar, accompanied the Franks.

[189] As we have previously stated, the Franks appointed a Frankish deputy in Egypt, set their troops on the main entrances and got hold of that place. Their greed to take hold of Egypt increased. They sent a message to their king, who was the most courageous, wary, and prudent among all the Frankish kings - to come and seize Egypt. They informed him that there would be no one to defend the country; thus they expected that his task would be quite easy. The Frankish king, however, did not accept their challenge. Some prominent leaders tried to convince the king to march to Egypt and take hold of it. But he said, "In my opinion, it is not good to march to Egypt. If we march to Egypt to capture it, the Egyptian ruler, his men, and the Egyptian citizens and peasants will fight against us. Furthermore, their fear of us may force them to hand Egypt to Nur ad-Din. In this case, we will surely be forced to leave the Levant."

The Frankish leaders did not heed their king. They said, "Egypt now has no defenders, so before Nur ad-Din knows about what is happening and prepares his soldiers to march against us, we will attain our goal. As a consequence, Nur ad-Din will ask us for safety and we will not grant him that."

The Frankish king unwillingly accepted their demand. They equipped themselves and acted as if they were marching to the Levant; particularly to Hims. In the middle of the month of Muharram, the Franks marched from Ashkelon until they reached Bilbis on the first day of Safar. They besieged the city, and then attacked and managed to capture it. They plundered the city, captured its dwellers, and resided there for five days. They went to Cairo and besieged it on the 10th of Safar. Being afraid of what the Franks would do to them because of what they had done to the people of Bilbis, the people of Cairo resisted and exerted a great effort in fighting the enemy. Actually, if the Franks had treated the people of Bilbis kindly, they would have gained hold of both Cairo and Egypt.

[190] Fearing the Franks, Shawar ordered his men to burn Old Cairo on the 9th of Safar, only one day before the arrival of the Franks. A fire burned for about fifty-four days until the 5th of Rabi` al-Akhir. When Shawar feared the ruin of the Egyptian lands and recognized that he had no power to defend the country, he sent a message to the Frankish king reminding him of their friendship and his loyalty to him; but he feared both Nur ad-Din and al-`Adid. He also told the Frankish king that the Egyptians would not agree to surrender; thus he asked for reconciliation and offered him a huge sum of money so as not to hand Egypt to Nur ad-Din. The Frankish king accepted his demand in return for one million Egyptian dinars; part of which was to be paid in advance.

They agreed upon that and said, "We will take the money in order to reinforce ourselves, increase our soldiers and then we will return to Egypt with forces that fear no one even Nur ad-Din."

Shawar paid them only one hundred thousand dinars and asked them to leave Egypt so as to collect the remaining amount of money. As a result, the Franks left Egypt at once.

[191] Immediately after the burning of Old Cairo, al-`Adid, the Egyptian ruler, sent a message to Nur ad-Din asking for his help. Al-`Adid sent him locks of women's hair with his letters. He wrote, "These locks of hair belong to my women. They appeal to you to save them from the Franks." As a result, Nur ad-Din felt agitated and began to prepare his soldiers to march to Egypt.

When Shawar agreed with the Frankish king to pay him an amount of money, al-`Adid sent a message again to Nur ad-Din informing him about what the Muslims had experienced at the hands of the Franks. Al-`Adid promised to give him great presents in return for allowing Asad ad Din to stay with his army in Egypt.

Chapter XXVII

Nur ad Din's Reaction

[192] When al-`Adid's message reached Nur ad-Din, he summoned Asad ad-Din from Hims. When the messenger left Aleppo, he found that Asad ad-Din had arrived there. He intended to go to Egypt as the Egyptians had sent him messages appealing to him to save them from the Franks. As a result, Asad ad-Din became impatient and did not know what to do. Being ambitious to capture Egypt, he was afraid that the Franks might overtake it. Thus, he marched from Hims to Aleppo and met Nur ad-Din at the moment of his arrival. On hearing from Asad ad-Din, Nur ad-Din wondered at that but he regarded it as a good omen. He thanked Asad ad-Din and ordered him to prepare himself to march to Egypt as soon as possible.

In order to do so, Nur ad-Din gave Asad ad-Din two hundred thousand dinars and all the supplies he needed. He asked Asad ad-Din to choose the soldiers who would go with him. Asad ad Din chose two thousand warriors, took an amount of money, gathered six thousand warriors from the Turks and then marched with Nur ad-Din to Damascus. Nur ad-Din gave twenty dinars to each warrior; furthermore, he ordered some princes and prominent leaders to go with Asad ad-Din.

They all marched in the middle of Rabi' al-Awwal towards Egypt, invoking Allah to grant them victory. Nur ad-Din encamped at Ras al-Ma' (a place near Damascus) waiting for news of the campaign. Then the messenger came to inform Nur ad-Din that the Franks, hearing about the arrival of Nur ad-Din's army, left Cairo and returned home and that the Frankish king cursed all those who had incited him to go to Egypt. On hearing this good news, Nur ad-Din sent his messengers to inform all his territories.

Judge Abu al-Mahasin said:

Sultan Saladin told me, "Unlike all soldiers, I was the one who hated to march to Egypt most. I marched with my uncle Asad ad-Din reluctantly. This is the meaning of what Allah the Almighty says, ﴿*...and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows but you do not know.*﴾[1]"

Ibn al-Athir said:

Saladin, on the other hand, did not like the idea of marching towards Egypt in spite of the fact that this battle would be the main cause of his pleasure and consequent reign. I was informed that Saladin said, "When the Egyptian messages reached king Nur ad-Din (may Allah be pleased with him) asking for his help and support, he

1. Al-Baqarah: 216.

called me out and informed me of the whole matter. Then he said to me, 'You will go with my messenger to your uncle Asad ad-Din at Hims and ask him to come. You have to urge him to come as soon as possible because the situation is unbearable.' Thus, I marched to my uncle at Hims. On our way, exactly one mile from Aleppo, we met him coming toward us. Nur ad-Din told him, 'Get ready to march to Egypt.' In the beginning, Asad ad-Din refused due to the betrayal of the Egyptians and because he did not have enough money to cover the expenses. Nur ad-Din, however, granted him money and soldiers and told him, 'If you delay your march to Egypt, then it will become obligatory for me to march there. If we neglect the matter, the Franks will take hold of Egypt; consequently, we will lose our prestige both in the Levant and in all other territories.' Then my uncle Asad ad-Din looked at me and said, 'O Yusuf! Prepare yourself.' On hearing that, I felt as if I had been stabbed with a knife and said, 'By Allah! I will never march to Egypt even if you make me its king. I will never forget how I suffered in Alexandria.' My uncle told Nur ad-Din that it was absolutely necessary that I march with him. Nur ad-Din then commanded me to march with my uncle and told me that the meeting was over. Afterwards, Asad ad-Din gathered his soldiers from among the Turks and others. When they were about to head for Egypt, Nur ad-Din told me, 'You should march to Egypt with your uncle.' But I complained to him that there was not enough to cover the expenses and the equipment for the campaign. Thus, he gave me the required money; hence, I marched with Asad ad-Din to Egypt. After the death of Nur ad-Din, Almighty Allah granted me what I had never expected."

Chapter XXVIII

The Arrest and Killing of Shawar

[193] Asad ad-Din reached Cairo on the 7th of Rabi` al-Akhir. There he met al-`Adid, the Egyptian ruler, who had granted Asad ad-Din and his soldiers many gifts and great bounties. Shawar had no power to prevent that. When he saw the great numbers of soldiers and how al-`Adid took care of them, he did not dare to disclose his real feelings. Still Shawar put off getting Asad ad-Din to fulfill what they had previously agreed upon for both Asad ad-Din and his troops, and had granted one-third of the Egyptian territories to Nur ad-Din. Meanwhile, Shawar used to go to Asad ad-Din, walk with him, and promise him to fulfill his commitment with him, but in vain.

Shawar intended to invite Asad ad-Din and his princes so that he could arrest them. Shawar's son, al-Kamil, prevented his father from doing so and addressed him saying, "By Allah! If you decide to do so, I will tell Asad ad-Din." Shawar however, said, "By Allah if I do not do that, all of us will be killed." His son said, "You are right. Yet, it is better for us to be killed while being Muslims and under the Muslims' rule than to be killed under the rule of the Franks. The Franks will come as soon as they know about the arrest of Asad ad-Din Shirkuh. Then, if al-`Adid sends a message to Nur ad-Din, Nur ad-Din will never send a single soldier and the Franks will take hold of Egypt."

As a result, Shawar gave up his intention of arresting Asad ad-Din and the other princes. Yet, when Nur ad-Din's armies became aware of

Shawar's procrastination, Saladin Yusuf, `Izz ad-Din Jurdik and others agreed to kill him. They informed Asad ad-Din of their decision, but he forbade them to do so. The soldiers said, "We will have nothing as long as he is alive." But Asad ad-Din decisively refused.

One day, Asad ad-Din went to visit the tomb of Imam ash-Shafi`i (may Allah be pleased with him). As usual, Shawar went to meet Asad ad-Din's troops and there he met Saladin, `Izz ad-Din Jurdik and a group of soldiers who served him and informed him about Asad ad-Din's visit. Shawar said, "Let us go to him." As they were walking, Saladin and his followers attacked Shawar and his men. They took Shawar captive but many of his men managed to escape. Saladin and his companions were unable to kill Shawar without Asad ad-Din's permission. They imprisoned him in a tent and manned it. When Asad ad-Din came to know about that he returned at once and he had no choice but to complete what Saladin and his followers had done to Shawar. At that time, al-`Adid sent many messengers to Asad ad-Din supporting the idea of killing Shawar.

Thus, on the 17th of Rabi` al-Akhir, Asad ad-Din gave orders to his men to behead Shawar. When he reached Cairo, Asad ad-Din saw such great throngs of people to the extent that he feared for himself. He told them, "The ruler has granted you the right to capture Shawar's house." As a result, the people headed for Shawar's house to capture it and scattered from around Asad ad-Din. This was narrated by Ibn al-Athir.

Chapter XXIX

Asad ad-Din's Heading the Ministry, Immediately After the Death of Shawar

[194] Al-`Adid let Asad ad-Din who was called the victorious king and the prince of armies to assume the ministry. Thus, Asad ad-Din became the head of the ministry. He went to the Egyptian ministry, which was the residence of Shawar and his predecessors, and settled there. He remained in his position without any contender or antagonist. He invested the people he trusted with the Egyptian provinces. Assuming power, Asad ad-Din distributed the Egyptian territories among the soldiers who had come with him to Egypt. Saladin, because of his competence, prudence, patience and wisdom was given a free hand in Egypt.

Chapter XXX

Death of Asad ad-Din Shirkuh and the Succession of His Nephew Saladin

[195] Asad ad-Din passed away suddenly on the 22nd of Jumada al-Akhirah. He remained the head of the Egyptian ministry for two months and five days.

[196] Ibn Shaddad said:

Asad ad-Din, who was fond of fatty meat, used to overeat. So, he used to suffer from indigestion and croup. Then, he (may Allah have mercy on him) was afflicted with croup that caused his death.

[197] After Asad ad-Din's death, his nephew Saladin succeeded him. During the reign of Asad ad-Din, the Egyptian provinces were kept organized. He had used to distribute money and gather men to his side. He did not care about life because it was so trifling for him.

[198] Ibn al-Athir said:

When Saladin succeeded to power, it happened that a group of Nur ad-Din's princes, who were in Egypt, asked to take advance over the troops and to take possession of the Egyptian ministry. However, al-`Adid sent a message to Saladin to invest him with authority over the Egyptian ministry and to make him succeed his uncle; Asad ad-Din Shirkuh.

The reason behind al-`Adid's action was the superficial weakness of Saladin. Al `Adid thought if he appointed Saladin while he had no troops, he would be under his rule and would not disobey him. Moreover, he thought that he would be able to appoint, on the Levantine army, the people who would be loyal to him; thus he would be able to expel the others and restore Egypt. Moreover, he would have the Levantine soldiers who would defend the country against the dangers of Nur ad-Din and the Franks.

However, Saladin proved to be strong-willed, thus, al-`Adid was unable to carry out his plans. Saladin became the deputy of Nur ad-Din and fulfilled all his commands. He favored the Egyptians and granted them of the money that had been collected by Asad ad-Din. In

addition, he asked al-`Adid to grant donations to the people and al-`Adid had no power to refuse. The people loved Saladin so much, whereas al-`Adid became very weak.

[199] Then Saladin sent a message to Nur ad-Din asking him to send his brothers. Nur ad-Din did not respond and addressed him, "I fear that they may disobey you which will result in Egypt being spoiled."

It happened that the Franks intended to march to Egypt. As a result, Nur ad-Din sent his soldiers to Egypt and among them were Saladin's brothers, including Shams ad-Dawlah Turanshah ibn Ayyub who was older than Saladin. When he prepared himself to march to Egypt, Nur ad-Din told him, "If you march to Egypt thinking that your brother is the one who used to serve you while you were relaxed, do not do so, because you will spoil the country. If you spoil the country, I will punish you severely. Rather, remember that he is the ruler of Egypt and my deputy there and you will serve him as you serve me here. If you agree then you can march to sustain and support him in whatever he does." Sham ad-Dawlah said, "I will serve and obey him and you will be informed about that (by Allah's Will)." Then Shams ad-Dawlah fulfilled his promise.

[200] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

My father (may Allah have mercy on him) said to me, "A group of Nur ad-Din's companions told me that when Nur ad-Din was informed about Asad ad-Din's death and Saladin's succession to power and how the Egyptians loved him, he denounced it and wondered, 'How did Saladin dare to behave like that without taking my permission?' Nur ad-Din wrote many messages to reproach Saladin, but Saladin did not take any notice of that.

[201] I think that Nur ad-Din's behavior was simply a part of human nature. Allah the Almighty predestined this on His servants except those whom He safeguarded. However, it will be better to stick to fairness and patience.

[202] Actually, what Nur ad-Din condemned was Saladin's extra distribution of money without taking his permission. Ibn Abi Tayy, however, is to be blamed for attributing such false accusations to Nur ad-Din. Nur ad-Din humiliated the Shiites at Aleppo, abolished their creed and reinforced Ahl as-Sunnah (the followers of the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad, [peace be upon him]). Ibn Abi Tayy's father was one of the leaders of the Shiites whom Nur ad-Din had expelled from Aleppo; thus, Ibn Abi Tayy used to criticize Nur ad-Din frequently in his book. Hence, we cannot approve of the calumnies that he attributed to Nur ad-Din. Allah knows best.[1]

Events of 565 A.H. (1170 A.C.)

[203] On the 1st of Safar of that year, the Franks settled in Damietta, an Egyptian province.

Ibn al-Athir said:

When Asad ad-Din took hold of Egypt, the Franks, who were at the seashore, were overwhelmed with terror. Thus, they sent a message to the Franks of Andalusia and Sicily asking them for reinforcements

1. It was widespread in historical books that the relationship between Nur ad-Din and Saladin had deteriorated to the extent that some modern authors wrote about it defaming both of them. Hence, such a comment from Abu Shamah is very appropriate to reveal the reality (the compiler)

They informed them about the new incidents taking place in Egypt and expressed their fear about Jerusalem. They sent a group of their priests and monks to incite their people to move, and they provided them with money, soldiers and weapons. The Franks then agreed upon settling in Damietta, thinking that it would be their key to all the Egyptian cities.

When they settled there, they besieged it and kept its dwellers in. As a result, Saladin sent his troops to cross the Nile and provided them with money, arms, and supplies. Then he sent his messengers to Nur ad-Din expressing his fears that the Franks might take hold of Damietta if he did not attack them. Moreover, he expressed his fear that the Egyptians might take his position and disobey him if he marched to Damietta.

Consequently, Nur ad-Din equipped his armies and ordered them to march to support Saladin. Then, Nur ad-din with the rest of his soldiers raided the Frankish states. Due to the absence of the Frankish soldiers, Nur ad-Din's raids were very effective. When the Franks knew that the armies of Nur ad-Din were on their way to Egypt, they decided to return, and, when they went back home, they found that their cities had been ruined.

[204] The Franks settled in Damietta for about fifty days during which Saladin spent a great amount of money. It was reported that Saladin said, "I have never seen such a generous person as al-`Adid who sent me, during the Franks' siege of Damietta, one million Egyptian dinars, clothes, and many gifts."

Al-`Imad said:

When Nur ad-Din was informed of the arrival of the Franks at Damietta, he became upset and then began to send huge numbers of his soldiers to that place.

[205] He was greatly concerned about the Muslims besieged in Damietta. It happened at that time that a reader recited to him a part of a *hadith*. Nur ad-Din was supposed to smile just as the narrators used to do since the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him); but he did not. The students who were present asked him to smile, but he felt agitated and said, "I feel ashamed in front of the Almighty to see me smile while the Franks are besieging the Muslims in Damietta."

[206] I was informed that one of Nur ad-Din's Imams dreamt of the Prophet (peace be upon him) on the eve of the Franks' departure form Damietta and that the Prophet (peace be upon him) told him, "Tell Nur ad-Din that the Franks departed from Damietta tonight." The Imam said, "O Messenger of Allah! Nur ad-Din may not believe me if I inform him of that. So, tell me a sign that he knows." The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Tell him about his prostration on the hill of Harim and his saying, 'Oh Allah! Grant victory to Your religion not to me! Who is that dog Mahmud to be honored with Your victory?!'"

Nur ad-Din's Imam said, "Hence, I got up and went to the mosque. It was Nur ad-Din's habit to frequent the mosque during the dusk and pray till the *Fajr* Prayer. When I stopped him, Nur ad-Din asked what was wrong with me. So I told him about the dream and the sign which the Prophet (peace be upon him) mentioned. However, I did not mention the word "dog'. Yet, Nur ad-Din insisted that I mention all the details of the sign. After mentioning the whole sign to him, Nur ad-Din (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) wept and believed the dream. I remembered the date of that night and then news came to inform us of the Franks' departure from Damietta on that very night."

Chapter XXXI

Najm Ad-Din Ayyub's March to Egypt with the Rest of His Sons and Family

Al-`Imad said:

Prince Najm ad-Din Ayyub asked for Nur ad-Din's permission to allow him to go to his son Saladin and depart with his family from Damascus to Egypt. After taking permission, Najm ad-Din traveled safely to Egypt and arrived there on the 27th of Rajab.

[207] Ibn Shaddad said:

Saladin sent a message to his father to please him and make his story resemble that of Prophet Yusuf (peace be upon him). Hence, Najm ad-Din came to his son Saladin who wanted to invest his father with all his authority, but the father refused and said, "O my son! Allah would never choose you for this matter unless you are competent, so you should not spoil our happiness." Then Saladin empowered his father to command over all the Egyptian treasuries.

Najm ad-Din (may Allah have mercy upon him) was a generous man who used to grant money without seeking any return. Saladin remained in the Egyptian ministry until the death of al-`Adid Abu Muhammad ad-Din `Abdullah who was the last of all the Egyptian successors.(1)

1. Namely the successors who are falsely called the Fatimids.

[208] Ibn Abi Tayy said.

The Abbasid successor sent a message to Nur ad-Din from Baghdad blaming him for the delay in acknowledging his caliphate. As a result, Nur ad-Din summoned prince Najm ad-Din Ayyub and ordered him to march to his son Saladin and to submit to him a message for that purpose. A part of this message reads, "This is a matter that you should quickly achieve so as to gain this solemn virtue and noble deed before death. The Abbasid successor, particularly, is looking forward to that considering it as one of his sublime wishes."

Hence, Najm ad-Din marched to Egypt with a marvelous gift that Nur ad-Din sent to Saladin. Unlike the usual habit, al-`Adid left his home to meet Najm ad-Din; Egypt had never witnessed such a day before. Al-`Adid granted him many antiques, gifts, and presents and gave him the title of "The best king". Sultan Saladin expressed his gratitude for and praise of his father; he assigned him a house next to his and granted him Alexandria, Damietta, and al-Bihirah. He also granted his brother Shams ad-Dawlah Qus, Aswan, and `Aydhab. On the eve of *`Id al-Fitr* (the festival of breaking the fast) in that year, sultan Saladin was granted a son, whom named Nur ad-Din `Ali. Full of happiness, Saladin gifted to the people generously.

Chapter XXXII
Great Earthquake

Ibn al-Athir said:

[209] On the 12th of Shawwal a destructive earthquake, which the people had never seen before, took place in the Levant, Egypt, the

Arabian Peninsula, Mosul. Iraq, and other countries. The Levant was severely damaged compared to other places. The earthquake ruined Ba`labak, Hims, Hamah, Shayzar, and other provinces. The walls and castles of the Levant were demolished, houses collapsed on their dwellers and the dead could not be counted. When he was informed of the ruin of Ba`labak, Nur ad Din went there to reconstruct its ruined walls and castles. At that time, Nur ad-Din was still unaware of the destruction of the other provinces. When he reached Ba`labak, he was informed about the ruin of the other cities. As a result, he appointed a ruler to reconstruct Ba`labak and marched to Hims and did the same then to Hamah and Barin.

Nur ad-Din was worried about the safety of his countries, particularly the castle of Barin which was close to the Franks. He appointed a leader over a group of soldiers to settle in Barin and commanded that the castle be reconstructed and that they must work day and night.

When he reached Aleppo, he found that the traces of the earthquake were much greater in it than in any other city. The people of Aleppo were panic-stricken that they feared entering their homes lest the earthquake might happen once again. Also, the people of Aleppo refused to stay near the borders of Aleppo for fear of the Franks. When he came to know that, Nur ad-Din stayed in Aleppo and personally supervised its reconstruction. He remained in that state until he managed to finish the reconstruction of its walls. He also reconstructed all the ruined countries and the mosques and spent uncountable amounts of money.

The Frankish lands were also severely damaged by the earthquake. Being worried about their territories, thinking that Nur ad-Din might attack them, the Franks immediately began the process of

reconstruction. That is to say Nur ad-Din and the Franks reconstructed their lands out of fear of each other.

[210] Ibn al-Athir said:

In Shawwal of this year, the king Qutb ad-Din Mawdud ibn Zangi, the ruler of Mosul, passed away.

[211] When he became more and more ill, king Qutb ad-Din recommended his eldest and dearest son, `Imad ad-Din Zangi ibn Mawdud to assume power. At that time, Qutb ad-Din's deputy was Fakhr ad-Din `Abd al-Masih who detested `Imad ad-Din because of his high rank to his uncle Nur ad-Din. `Imad ad-Din served his uncle, married his daughter, and was greatly endeared to him.

Because of `Abd al-Masih's unfairness, Nur ad-Din detested and reproved him, and blamed his brother Qutb ad-Din for entrusting such a person with the authority over his state. Being afraid that `Imad ad-Din might comply with his uncle's orders and expel him, `Abd al-Masih agreed with al-Khatun, the daughter of Husam ad-Din Tamrtash and Qutb ad-Din's wife, to dissuade Qutb ad-Din from investing his son with authority. Accordingly, in the early morning king Qutb ad-Din summoned his princes and recommended his son Sayf ad-Din Ghazi to be his successor. When he died, king Qutb ad-Din was forty years old and the period of his reign lasted for twenty-one years and five and a half months.

[212] Following Qutb ad-Din's death, Sayf ad-Din Ghazi succeeded him in power. As a result, `Imad ad-Din went to his uncle Nur ad-Din, asking for his help and support. At that time, `Abd al-Masih was completely dominating Sayf ad-Din's kingdom. Being an inexperienced young man, Sayf ad-Din had no power at all.

[213] Ibn al-Athir said:

Qutb ad-Din was one of the best and most pious kings. He was benevolent, charitable, most beloved to both juniors and seniors, kind to the guilty, and greatly interested in doing good deeds.

[214] He added:

Qutb ad-Din was patient with his companions and used to endure unbearable things from his deputies Zayn ad-Din, Jamal ad-Din and others. He maintained constant harmony with his brother king Nur ad-Din. He also used to help him both personally and with his armies and wealth. With Nur ad-Din, he witnessed the conquest of Harim and Baniyas. He would voluntarily deliver speeches in favor of his brother Nur ad-Din. Moreover, Qutb ad-Din granted money to his friends without being asked to do so. He detested injustice and punished those who oppressed others.

[215] He went on to say:

I swear by Allah when I think of Zangi's sons, Sayf ad-Din, Nur ad-Din and Qutb ad-Din, and their noble features, good conduct, care for their territories, kindness to their citizens and the other characteristics which Allah granted them and which are necessary to all kings, I inevitably remember these two lines of verse:

Every one of them, you feel, is a master
They are like stars that lead the night traveler.

[216] I have read a message that sheikh `Umar al-Malla (may Allah have mercy upon him) had written to a righteous man, asking him to pray for Qutb ad-Din, the ruler of Mosul. The message reads:

"O brother! If I desired to explain his noble deeds and the happiness of his citizens, then I would have to write many books. However, I will state the noble characteristics that Allah granted him: he was the most lenient among all people, the most humble, the modest, the least greedy, the farthest from injustice, the most tolerant, the most tranquil, and the most content. It is for these good manners that I love him so much; between us is an affection and an exchange of visits."

Chapter XXXIII

Ibn al-Athir said:

When Nur ad-Din was informed of the death of his brother Qutb ad-Din and the succession of his son Sayf ad-Din, and `Abd al-Masih's taking exclusive possession of the matters of state and his command over Sayf ad-Din, he felt anxious and agitated. Nur ad-Din detested `Abd al-Masih because of his cruelty to the citizens. Being lenient, kind and fair, Nur ad-Din said, "I should take care of my nephews and their possessions." Then on the 1st of Muharram, he marched and crossed the Euphrates River towards the castle of Ja`bar.

Events of 566 A.H. (1171 A.C.)

Nur ad-Din headed for ar-Riqqah where its ruler resisted him but then submitted it to him. Then he marched to al-Khabur where he

seized Nasibayn and settled there to gather his armies who were in the Levant to defend its borders against the Franks and others. When he gathered armies. Nur ad-Din headed for Sinjar which he besieged and settled in. A great army of Mosul was also settling there. Some of the princes of Mosul sent a message to Nur ad-Din urging him to come so that they could submit Mosul to him in return for Sinjar. But he refused and exerted great efforts until he seized Sinjar and gave it to his eldest nephew `Imad ad-Din Zangi. He then settled at the fort of Ninoy, east of Mosul.

Ibn al-Athir said:

It happened that `Abd al-Masih sent `Izz ad-Din Mas`ud ibn Qutb ad-Din to Ildakz, the ruler of Azerbaijan and other countries, asking for his help. As a result, Ildakz sent a messenger to Nur ad-Din warning him against going to Mosul; he told him that these countries belonged only to the sultan. Nur ad-Din, who was then at Sinjar, did not take Ildakz's message seriously. Rather, he marched to Mosul and told the messenger to tell Ildakz the following message, "I am kinder to my nephews than you. So you should not intrude in our affairs. When I settle with my nephews, I will meet you at the gate of Hamadhan. You possess half the Muslim states and you have left the frontiers until the Karjs[1] have taken hold of them. I have been afflicted with the most intrepid people; the Franks. However, I managed to gain hold of their countries and capture their kings. Hence, I should not leave you in that state; I have to protect the Muslim states that you have neglected and lift the injustices there."

Nur ad-Din besieged Mosul without any conflict. On account of his good conduct and fairness, the soldiers and the common people of Mosul were inclined to him. The princes of Mosul also corresponded

1 A group of unbelievers were in these lands.

with Nur ad-Din urging him to rush down upon `Abd al-Masih. When `Abd al-Masih knew of that, he corresponded with Nur ad-Din offering him Mosul in return for safety and a fief. Nur ad-Din accepted his offer and said, "`Abd al-Masih should not remain in Mosul, but he will be near me in the Levant. I did not come to capture Mosul from my nephews; rather, I came to rescue the people from `Abd al-Masih and take charge of training my nephews."

Thus, Mosul was given to him on the 13th of Jumada al-Ula. He resided in its castle and appointed a servant called Sa`d ad-Din Kamishtakin as a governor over the castle. He acknowledged Sayf ad-Din Ghazi as the ruler of Mosul and distributed Qutb ad-Din's wealth among his sons (Qutb ad-Din's sons) in accordance with the rule of inheritance in Islam.

[217] When Nur ad-Din entered Mosul, he cancelled the customs in Mosul and all the territories that he had conquered. He also ordered that the Nuri mosque at Mosul be built; the mosque was built and people began to perform prayers in it in 573 A.H. (1178 A.C.). He remained in Mosul for about twenty days and then marched to the Levant. When he was asked about the reason behind his return to the Levant, though he preferred to stay in Mosul, Nur ad-Din said, "If I stay in Mosul I may do injustices because my heart has altered. Besides, if I stay here, I will never keep post of the frontiers of the enemy and continue in *Jihad*."

Afterwards, Nur ad-Din granted Nasibayn and al-Khabur to his soldiers. He also granted Jazirat ibn `Umar (Ibn `Umar's Island) to his nephew Sayf ad-Din Ghazi and then marched with `Abd al-Masih to the Levant ,where he changed `Abd al-Masih's name into `Abdullah and granted him great things.

[218] Al-`Imad said:

"Nur ad-Din entered the castle of Mosul and stayed there for seventeen days. He ordered that all taxes and customs be cancelled and issued a tract to be read publicly. A part of this tract reads:

"We have been content with our lawful shares although they are few. We put our complete trust in Allah. We began to abolish customs and taxes from all our far and near provinces. We began to eradicate each heinous and disgraceful enactment, to get rid of each hideous act of injustice. Also, we began to revive each noble enactment. We did that so as to put an end to injustices, to avoid Allah's Discontent and for the Sake of Allah's deferred reward. What we did is Allah's Right and an obligation for us to perform. This is a good action that we have enacted, a clear-cut method that we have shown, a compact rule that we have paved and a useful benefit that we have provided.'

Chapter XXXIV

[219] Al-`Imad said:

"There was a righteous man in Mosul known as `Umar al-Malla. He was so poor that the garments he used to wear were not his. Yet he granted the only property he possessed to one of his disciples. The disciple was trading with that property, and he used to host sheikh `Umar's visitors and guests. Sheikh `Umar was versed in the rules of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an and the prophetic *hadith*. Scholars, jurisprudents, kings and princes used to visit him at his corner so as to make use of his vast knowledge. He used to make an annual celebration which the ruler of Mosul would attend. Poets used to come

to this celebration to eulogize the Prophet (peace be upon him). Nur ad Din was one of his private visitors and close friends. He used to consult and correspond with him.

There was a vast ruined site at Mosul; it was common for people to say that no one started constructing this site and accomplished it throughout his lifetime. Sheikh `Umar, however, recommended Nur ad-Din to buy this site so as to set it up as a mosque. Nur ad-Din bought the site, spent great amounts of money on building it, and appointed a mufti and a preacher for it.

[220] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

When Sayf ad-Din, Nur ad-Din's nephew, took charge of Mosul, there was a Christian called `Abd al-Masih, who took exclusive possession of Mosul entirely. `Abd al-Masih embraced Islam; yet, it was said that he secretly remained Christian and had a church at his home. `Abd al-Masih used to trace the people of knowledge and the scholars of religion; he expelled them and caused harm to the Muslims. When Nur ad-Din was informed about that through many messages, he marched and settled in Mosul beside the riverbank. He said, "I will never fight and violate Mosul while it belongs to my nephew." He sent a message to Sayf ad-Din and said, "I did not intend to seize the country, rather, I came to protect it. I have been told about thousands of stories concerning `Abd al-Masih's mistreatment of the Muslims. My purpose is to prevent that Christian from taking command over the Muslims. At that time, `Abd al-Masih was in charge of the entire Mosul. Great efforts had been exerted to make reconciliation with Nur ad-Din, but the latter said, "I have come and I should enter Mosul." A lot of correspondences took place between Nur ad-Din and his nephew until he, Sayf ad-Din, knew of his uncle's good intentions, and made a secret reconciliation.

[221] `Abd al-Masih mounted his horse and began to wander between the two walls of Mosul. One of his companions came to him and said, "Your blood is spilled while you are sleeping unmindfully." `Abd al-Masih asked, "What is the matter?" His companion said, "Sayf ad-Din reconciled with his uncle and you are about to confront Nur ad-Din." Then, `Abd al-Masih went to Sayf ad-Din and said, "You have reconciled with your uncle and I have exerted a great effort to defend and guard your territory. I have no power to confront Nur ad-Din; so please save me!" Sayf ad-Din said, "I cannot dissuade my uncle from doing so. However, you can go to sheikh `Umar al-Malla." `Abd al-Masih said, "By Allah if I went to sheikh `Umar (because he had been informed of `Abd al-Masih's misdeeds with the Muslims), he would not host me. However, you can send anyone to summon him.'

Sayf ad-Din then summoned sheikh `Umar who was secluded in the mosque. Sheikh `Umar asked Sayf ad-Din about the matter, so Sayf ad-Din asked `Abd al-Masih to tell his story. `Abd al-Masih stood weeping before sheikh `Umar who looked at him and said, "He who becomes hostile to men will weep like women." `Abd al-Masih said, "I seek your protection; I appeal to you to save my blood." Sheikh `Umar said, "You are secure concerning your blood." `Abd al-Masih said, "What about my wealth?" Sheikh `Umar answered, "You are secure concerning your wealth." `Abd al Masih said, "And what about my family?" Sheikh `Umar said, "And your family too."

Sayf ad-Din summoned the jurisprudents who made a copy of the oath to Nur ad-Din and one to `Abd al-Masih. Sheikh `Umar took the two copies and went to Nur ad-Din. On seeing him, king Nur ad-Din left his tent and received him cordially and hospitably. Sheikh `Umar told Nur ad-Din, "People know that you trust me and I came for such and such a purpose." Then Sheikh `Umar gave him Sayf ad-Din's

copy. Sheikh `Umar told Nur ad-Din, "People know that you trust me and that I came to you and you have to host me." Nur ad-Din wondered, "How can I do that while you do not eat my food or accept anything from me?" Sheikh `Umar said, "Your hospitality is to swear by this copy." On reading its contents, Nur ad-Din cried, "I came here only to rescue the Muslims from him." Sheikh `Umar said, "We do not ask you to invest him with any authority over the Muslims." Then Nur ad-Din said, "I grant him security for his soul." Sheikh `Umar said, "And for his family." Nur ad-Din said, "Who are his family?" Sheikh `Umar said, "They are Christians." Nur ad-Din said, "I grant them security." Sheikh `Umar said, "And for his wealth." Nur ad-Din wondered, "How did this dog get this wealth? He is just one of our slaves!" Sheikh `Umar answered, "He was set free and once he was the ruler of Mosul." Nur ad-Din said, "I grant him security for his wealth." Nur ad-Din swore to all these things and the reconciliation was established.

Sayf ad-Din then went to Nur ad-Din who treated him hospitably. Afterwards, Nur ad-Din moved to the other side of the riverbank but he did not enter Mosul except after heavy rainfall. Thus, Nur ad-Din entered Mosul secretly and remained there for awhile where he settled its conditions and appointed Sa`d ad-Din Kamishtakin as ruler over it.

[222] One night, Nur ad-Din dreamt of the Prophet (peace be upon him) telling him, "You came to this territory and enjoyed your stay here, and you neglected *Jihad* and fighting against the enemies of Islam." As a result, Nur ad-Din woke up and marched late that night.

Event of 567 A.H. (1172 A.C.)

[223] Saladin (may Allah have mercy upon him) eulogized Banu al-`Abbas on the first Friday of this year during his sermon in Old Cairo. He did the same in Cairo the following Friday. Al `Adid, the successor of Egypt, died in his palace on the day of `*Ashura*' (the tenth day of the month of Muharram). When al-`Adid's died, there was no mention of any other Egyptian successor; thus, the dynasty of al-`Adid came to an end.

[224] Ibn al-Athir said:

Nur ad-Din sent a message to Saladin Yusuf ibn Ayyub, who had an exclusive power after his antagonists had left, and al-`Adid, the successor of Egypt, became weak. He did this to prevent the people from eulogizing and praying for al-`Adid in the sermons and make them pray for the Abbasids instead. Being afraid that the Egyptians would disobey him and refuse to say Ameen, Saladin backed off and apologized. However, Nur ad-Din did not pay any attention to Saladin's words and ordered him to do that as soon as possible. It so happened that at the time when Saladin resolved to stop praising al-`Adid, al-`Adid became ill. Saladin consulted his princes about eulogizing the Abbasids during the sermons. Some of the princes agreed to help him while some others refrained. Saladin had no other choice but to comply with Nur ad-Din's order. Meanwhile, a non-Arab known as al-Amir al-`Alim (the scholar prince) came to Egypt and we used to see him frequently. On seeing the princes' refusal to start eulogizing the Abbasids during their sermons, the non-Arab said,

"Verily, I will do that.' So the very next Friday prayer of the month of Muharram, that non-Arab man ascended the pulpit before the preacher and began to eulogize and pray for al-Mustadi' Bi Amr Allah (the title of the Abbasid caliph) and no one criticized him. The next Friday prayer, Saladin commanded the preachers of Cairo to stop eulogizing al-`Adid and to direct their prayers and eulogizes to the Abbasid Caliph. The preachers did that without hesitation, then Saladin ordered this to be done throughout the Egyptian provinces.

When al-`Adid's disease became severe, his family and companions refused to tell him what was happening. Rather they said, "If he recovered, he would know it; but if he dies, we should not embitter the last days of his life." Al-`Adid died on the day of *`Ashura'* without knowing about his disease.

[225] He added:

When al-Adid passed away, Saladin stayed in his palace to console himself and then took control of the situation. Prior to al-Adid's death, Saladin appointed Baha' ad-Din Qaraqush to guard the palace and all its contents. This was the case until Saladin took over the palace. Afterwards, Saladin took al-`Adid's family to an isolated place and entrusted some people to guard them. Then, he made al-`Adid's sons, uncles, and nephews part of the grand court of the palace and entrusted some people to take care of them. He emancipated some of the bondsmen and bondswomen who were at the palace; granted others and sold the rest.

[226] Abu al-Futuh told me that Saladin put them in Barjawan's house in the district that is named after him in Cairo. It was a vast house in which al-`Adid's family gladly lived. When the dynasty of Saladin ended, Al-`Adid's family were expelled from that house.

Al-`Imad said, "Baha' ad-Din Qaraqush took charge of al `Adid's family, and used to guard them by day and night. Saladin gathered the rest of al-`Adid's uncles and kindred, put them in the grand court of the palace and took care of them. He separated men from women so as to prevent their numbers from increasing. They remained confined and their numbers began to diminish. Saladin exhibited all the contents of al-`Adid's palace and sold or granted them. He continued to sell them for ten years. They were taken into other territories by travelers."

[227] After eulogizing al-`Adid during the sermons was stopped, the Sunnites (the followers of the Prophet's Sunnah) attacked the Ismailites[1] and pursued them to the extent that they were unable to leave their homes. Accordingly, many Egyptian followers of that sect began to leave to other territories. As a result, people were pleased and they sent messages to the other countries informing them of this news.

[228] When Nur ad-Din came to know this, he delegated Shihab ad-Din Abu al-Ma`ali al-Mutahhar ibn Abi `Asrun to Baghdad to inform the people about what was happening and to deliver a message to be read in every city he passed by. The paper reads:

We have issued this message to all the Islamic states in general on the ground of the conquest Allah granted us and revealed to us its method. This is what we ratified to establish the Abbasid guiding call throughout the Egyptian cities. This may be considered a great honor to our people to boast of their predecessors. Being intent on conquering Egypt and establishing the Abbasid system in it, we remained concerned until we got hold of it after the kings had despaired of doing so. It remained under the rule of the devil's

1. A sect founded by Isma`il ibn Ja`far as-Sadiq whose followers believe in the abolishment of legal obligations.

followers for two hundred and eighty years until Allah the Almighty enabled us to dispel its grief and redress its weakness that had encouraged the Franks' numerous attempts to capture it. Two bitter enemies, i.e. disbelief and innovation, combined in this country. Yet, the Almighty enabled us to contain it and helped us to get rid of the people of atheism and innovation who refused to perform the obligations of Islam.

[229] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

It was narrated that Ibn Abi al-Marastani, in *The Biography of Ibn Hubayrah*[1] said, "In 555 A.H. (1160 A.C.), one of the people of Baghdad dream of two moons, one of which was brighter than the other. The brighter one was directed towards the *Qiblah* (the direction of the Ka`bah) and was like a long black beard that used to move in any breeze and cast a shadow on earth. During his dream, he heard tones and voices that he had never heard before and he was like asking some of the attendants about that and they answered, 'People changed their Imam.' The man saw that he directed towards the *Qiblah* and invoked the Almighty to make that Imam pious. Then he woke up. When Ibn Hubayrah, the minister of Baghdad at that time, was informed about that, he interpreted the dream saying, 'This man will become an Imam instead of the Egyptian one and his call will be to the Abbasids.' Ibn Hubayrah was so sure of this that he wrote to Nur ad-Din, at the time of Asad ad-Din's first march into it, telling him that he would gain control of it and make the call to the Abbasids."

1. The Iraqi Imam `Awn ad-Din Abu al-Muzhaffar Yahya ibn Muhammad ibn Hubayrah. He was poisoned in 560 A.H and thus died.

[230] Ibn Abi Tayy added:

Among the items that they sold was a great library. It was one of the wonders of the world as it was the greatest library in all the Islamic countries. It contained one thousand, two hundred and twenty copies of at-Tabari's History. It was narrated that it contained two million books as well as a great deal of scripts.

[231] People even distributed the floors of the palace. Saladin gave the northern palace to the princes and lodged his father, Najm ad-Din, at a great palace called al-L'lu'ah [The Pearl]. He moved his brother, al-`Adil, to that palace too. Thus, the so-called Fatimid dynasty completely vanished after they had take exclusive possession of the Egyptian state and exploited its people for more than two hundred and eighty years.

[232] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

It was narrated that ash-Sharif aj-Jalis, who was close to al-`Adid and used to converse with him, invited Shams ad-Dawlah ibn Ayyub; sultan Saladin's brother. The invitation came after taking control of al-`Adid's palaces and extinguishing their dynasty. When they sat at the banquet, Shams ad-Dawlah asked ash-Sharif, "Tell me about the strangest incident you have witnessed." Ash-Sharif answered, "Yes indeed! One day al-`Adid sent for me and some companions. When we went to him, we found two Turkish slaves wearing outer garments, caps and belts like yours. Then, we asked him, "O Commander of the Believers! What is this uniform which we have never seen before?" Al-`Adid answered, "It is the same uniform as those who will possess our territory and gain hold of our wealth and property."

Chapter XXXV

[233] With the death of al-`Adid that dynasty came to an end. After its extinction, the Muslims in Egypt were far from being humiliated. Saladin, his family, and deputies seized Egypt. They were all the followers of Nur ad-Din (may Allah have mercy upon him); his princes, servants, and companions. `Arqalah said about them:

The reign of Egypt after the followers of `Ali
Shined full with the kings of Shadhi.
The east now envies the west for its denizens,
And Egypt compared to Baghdad surpasses.
The Shadhis ruled Egypt with great resolution,
Strictly they reigned with hard determination.
The opposite of the pharaohs and al-`Aziz they are,
Outmatching both the preacher and the master.

[234] By the word "Master", the poet refers to Kafur al-Ikhshidi. By "After the followers of `Ali", the poet refers to Banu `Ubayd who became successors in Egypt. They pretended to be noble Fatimids and managed to control Egypt and subjugate its people. A group of the most prominent scholars stated that Banu `Ubayd were not qualified to be successors and that they did not really belong to the Fatimids at all. Rather, it is well-known that they were the offspring of `Ubayd whose father was a Magian calumniator. It was also said that `Ubayd's father was a Jew from the people of Salamiyyah in the Levant and that he

was a blacksmith. Ubayd's real name was Sa`id, but he changed it into `Ubayd Allah when he stayed in Morocco. He claimed that he was a Fatimid and a follower of Imam `Ali.

[235] `Ubayd continued to make progress until he became of a high rank and called himself al-Mahdi. He founded a sect called al-Mahdiyyah in Morocco. He was a wicked atheist and an antagonist to Islam. He claimed to be one of the Shi`ites, but in fact he tried to eradicate Islam. He killed a great number of Muslim jurisprudents, narrators of *hadiths*, and righteous people. He aimed at extirpating such people in order to lead the rest like herds and spoil their creed. However, Allah will complete His Light even though the disbelievers hate (it).

All the people considered `Ubayd's offspring and their followers to be misleaders. Islam was afflicted with this plague starting from the beginning of their dynasty in Dhu al-Hijjah in 299 A.H. (912 A.C.) until its end in 567 A.H. (1172 A.C.).

[236] During their time, the followers of ar-Rafidah increased in number and gained much power. They imposed taxes on the people and managed to change the creed of many people who blindly followed them. Furthermore, one of their groups managed to spoil the creed of the people who were living in the frontiers of the Levant such as an-Nasiriyyah, ad-Durziyyah, and al-Hashishiyyah because of their ignorance and naivety.

The Franks managed to control most of the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula, until the Almighty granted to the Muslims the family of `Imad ad-Din Zangi. Saladin, who was a prominent minister in that dynasty, managed to retrieve many territories and save their peoples.

Banu `Ubayd had fourteen successors; three of them (al-Mahdi, al-Qa'im and al Mansur) were in Africa and eleven (al-Mu`izz, al-`Aziz, al-Hakim, azh-Zhahir, al-Mustansir, al-Musta`li, al-Amir, al-Hafizh, azh-Zhafir, al-Fa'iz and al-`Adid) were in Egypt. They alleged that they belonged to a noble Muslim family while they were originally Jewish or Magian descendants. The common people believed that they belonged to the Fatimids and that they were the descendants of Imam `Ali.

They commanded their preachers to emphasize that fact and also used to write it on the walls of the mosques. Their slave Jawhar, who captured Egypt for them and built the Cairo of al-Mu`izz, delivered a long speech in which he said, "O Allah, grant Your Blessings and Mercy upon Your Servant; the devout worshiper, the gift of prophethood and the descendant of al-Hadi Ma`d Abi Tamim - al-Mu`izz Li Din Allah, as You have already granted Your Blessings and Mercy upon his chaste fathers and chosen ancestors; the rightly-guided Imams."

What a liar! May Allah curse him!

[237] Meanwhile, a group of the righteous predecessors exposed them concerning their lineage and revealed their enmity toward Islam. In his book *Revealing the Secrets of Al Batiniyyah*, Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn at-Tayyib al-Baqillani refuted their allegations of their belonging to the family of `Ali (may Allah be pleased with him). Furthermore, he pointed out that the calumniator to whom Banu `Ubayd belonged was a liar and was the leader of al-Qaramitah (may Allah curse them).

Judge `Abd al-Jabbar al-Basri studied deeply the lineage of the people of `Ubayd and refuted their claims in his book *Tathbit*

An-Nubuwwah. He exposed them and revealed some of their abominable actions and the sins they committed.

It is necessary to state some of their misdeeds in order to expose them to those who may believe in the validity of their reign and ignore their real origin, their rudeness and their obstinacy. It is important to know everything about them in order not to misjudge those who eradicated their state, removed their innovation, decreased their numbers, and destroyed their nation.

[238] Imam `Abd al-Jabbar mentioned that the so-called al-Mahdi (may Allah curse him) ordered the fools to insult the righteous people and sent his followers to murder Muslim jurisprudents and scholars in their homes. He sent messages to the Romans and asked them to abuse the Muslims. He continued his injustice-based policy; he usurped people's wealth and murdered them. His followers used to mislead the people in accordance with their limited understanding and knowledge. For example, they said to some people, "Al-Mahdi is the Prophet's son and Allah's argument against His creatures." They told some others, "He is the Messenger of Allah.' They even said, "He is Allah, the Creator and the Sustainer."

There is no god but Allah, the One Who has no partner. Glory be to Allah, the Almighty, Who is far beyond what the unjust say.

[239] After al-Mahdi's death, his son al-Qa'im succeeded him. He was even more dangerous than his father. He reviled the Prophets publicly and used to go to the markets and shout, "Cursed is `A'ishah and her husband. Cursed is the cave and its dweller."

O Allah! Grant Your Blessings and Mercy upon Your Prophet, his chaste wives and his Companions; and curse those atheists and impious disbelievers. O Allah! Have mercy upon those who disunited,

eradicated and uprooted them. O Allah, cast them into Hell-fire and make them among those to whom You say, ﴾*Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds!*﴿[1]

[240] Al-Qa'im sent for Abu Tahir al-Qarmati, who was in Bahrain, and urged him to murder the Muslims and burn the mosques and the copies of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an.

[241] After al-Qa'im's death, his son al-Mansur succeeded him Al-Mansur killed Abu Yazid Makhlad who bitterly blamed al-Mansur's father for his dreadful deeds. He tortured, skinned and crucified him. He also killed and expelled the people of the mountains out of fear that they might rebel against him as Abu Yazid had done.

[242] When al-Mansur died, his son al-Mu`izz succeeded him. Al-Mu`izz ordered his followers to mislead the people; they used to say to the people, "He is the one who will seize the earth and (after him) the sun will rise in the west."

[243] Al-Mu`izz was delighted whenever news came informing him that the Franks had attacked a Muslim territory.

[244] In addition, al-Mu`izz hid himself for some days and then reappeared claiming that Allah had lifted him to the heavens. In order to deceive people into believing him, he informed them about the things they had done during his absence as he relied on the words of his spies. Thus, the ignorant people believed these falsities. Al-Mu`izz was the first successor of Banu `Ubayd in Egypt and the one to whom the Cairo of al-Mu`izz was attributed.

1. Al Kahf: 104.

[245] Al-Mu`izz summoned the jurisprudent of the Levant, Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Sahl ar-Ramli, known as Ibn an-Nabulsi. When his men brought him in a wooden cage, he ordered them to skin him. Thus, they skinned him, stuffed his skin with straw and iron and then crucified him (may Allah have mercy upon him). Abu Dharr al-Harwi said, "I heard Abu al-Hasan ad-Dar Qatni say, "When people were skinning him, Ibn an-Nabulsi said, ﴿ *That is written in the Book (of our Decrees).* ﴾[1]"

[246] When al-Hakim assumed power, he ordered to write the revilement of the Prophet's Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) on the walls of mosques and streets. He wrote messages to all the provinces for that purpose.

[247] During the reign of al-Hakim, his men showed a Moroccan man around and exclaimed, "This is the reward of those who love Abu Bakr and `Umar." Then they beheaded him.

[248] During their reign, many similar things took place such as cutting out the tongue of the righteous Muslim, Abu al-Qasim al-Wasiti when he called to prayer in Jerusalem and said in his call, "Come to prosperity."

The reign of those cursed people was nothing but an affliction from Allah the Almighty. Though they were small in number - fourteen like the Ummayad successors - they remained in power for a long time. The Umayyads remained in power for ninety-one years while Banu `Ubayd remained for two hundred and sixty-eight years.

May Allah be pleased with those who participated in eradicating their rule and disclosing their lies and false allegations.

1. Al-Isra': 58.

[249] In his book *Ar-Radd `Ala Al-Batiniyyah* [Refuting the Allegations of Al-Batiniyyah], Imam Abu al-Qasim `Abd ar-Rahman ibn `Ali ibn Nasr ash-Shasi also exposed Banu `Ubayd and unveiled their true origin. He mentioned their disbelief, atrocities, and abominable actions during the rule of al-`Aziz and his successors. This was their case to the extent that a poet wrote a poem entitled, An Explanation of the Call of the Calumniator in which he outlined their lifestyle. The first two lines read:

Coming to Egypt, go on a bender
All set rules are hard to remember.

[250] Imam Abu al-Qasim said, "The Muslim kings should march to Egypt in order to invade the cursed men of al-Batiniyyah who are the most dangerous enemies of Islam. It has become an obligation on all Muslims to fight such enemies for they are no longer hypocrites; they have turned into disbelievers, for they publicly call to their disbelief. Their harm is much greater than that of the disbelievers."

[251] He who wants to know more about Banu `Ubayd and their atrocities, can easily find many books as numerous writers wrote about them.

[252] Among the best words said about them was the poem that praised the Auyybid sultans. I selected the following lines:

Are you not the ones who did us the favors
Of dethroning Banu `Ubayd;the disbelievrs?
Atheists, Shi`ites, and fire worshippers are they,
With no tinge of righteousness of which to boast.

They harbor disbelief and reveal their Shi`ism
To hide their deeds and spread heathenism.

[253] They alleged that they belonged to the family of Imam `Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) and concealed themselves in Shi`ism as al-Qaramitah who used to claim that they were aware of people's secret conditions. They were liars, and their main goal was to draw closer to the ignorant and common people so as to win them to their side.

Chapter XXXVI
Nur ad-Din's Determination to March to Egypt

[254] Ibn al-Athir said:

In 567 A.H. (1172 A.C.), another occurrence caused Nur ad-Din to be displeased with Saladin. It happened that Nur ad-Din commanded Saladin to mobilize his troops, march to the Franks and besiege al-Karak. At the same time, Nur ad-Din would gather his armies and march to meet him there to fight the Franks.

Saladin left Cairo on 20 Muharram and sent a message to Nur ad-Din informing him that he would soon be there. Nur ad-Din gathered his soldiers, prepared himself and waited for the news of Saladin's departure from Egypt in order to leave with his soldiers. When he was informed about that, Nur ad-Din went there but did not find Saladin. Nur ad-Din received an apology from Saladin for not

coming since he feared the possibility of disorder in Egypt if he should leave it. Nur ad-Din, however, did not accept Saladin's apology. The main cause behind Saladin's apology was that his retinue warned him against meeting Nur ad-Din. Thus, Nur ad-Din was determined to march to Egypt in order to depose him.

When Saladin was informed of Nur ad-Din's determination to depose him, he gathered his family, including his father Najm ad-Din Ayyub, his uncle Shihab ad-Din al-Harimi and all the princes in order to consult with them. His nephew Taqiyy ad-Din `Umar said, "If Nur ad-Din comes to us, we will fight and resist him." Many of the attendants accepted that, but Najm ad-Din Ayyub, who was wise, condemned that idea and rebuked them. He ordered Taqiyy ad-Din to keep silent and told Saladin, "I am your father and Shihab ad-Din is your uncle. Do you know any one who loves you and wishes you goodness more than us?" Saladin answered, "No." Najm ad-Din said, "By Allah! If I and your uncle see Nur ad-Din, we will immediately walk to him and kiss his feet; furthermore, if he orders us to behead you, we will do it at instantly. If we are to do that, what do you expect from others! When all these soldiers and princes see Nur ad-Din, they dare not to stay on the back of their horses. Rather, they will immediately get off and kiss his feet. These territories are his and he invested you with power over them. If Nur ad-Din wants to depose you, then there will be no necessity to his coming to Egypt; rather, he will send you a message to leave his service and he will appoint whoever he likes."

Then Najm ad-Din addressed the attendants, "Get out! We are Nur ad-Din's servants and he can do whatever he likes." They left and most of them wrote to Nur ad-Din to inform him about what had happened.

When Najm ad-Din was alone with Saladin, he told him, "You are ignorant and inexperienced because you gathered that great crowd and revealed your secrets. Yet, if Nur ad-Din heard that you decided to prevent him from entering Egypt, he would immediately march to you. If that happened these soldiers would abandon you and give you over to Nur ad-Din. But now they will write to Nur ad-Din to inform him about my words. You should also write to him to express your complete submission and say, 'It is not necessary to march by yourself; you can send any warrior to put a rope around my neck and drag me to you.' When Nur ad-Din reads these words, he will be dissuaded from coming to you and will be involved in other important issues."

Saladin did as his father asked him to do. When Nur ad-Din (may Allah have mercy upon him) knew that, he was dissuaded from marching to Egypt, just as Najm ad-Din had predicted. Nur ad-Din died without marching to Saladin or deposing him.

Chapter XXXVII

The Carrier Pigeons

[255] Ibn al-Athir said:

In 567 A.H. (1172 A.C.), king Nur ad-Din ordered that carrier pigeons should be made use of throughout his territories. The main cause behind that was the expansion of Nur ad-Din's kingdom which, at that time, extended from an-Nuba to the gates of Hamadhan. The Franks used to attack some frontiers, and before Nur ad-Din had a chance to know about an invasion, the Franks would have achieved

some of their goals. The pigeons were very important to Nur ad-Din because if he used the birds, news would reach him in time. Accordingly, Nur ad-Din's frontiers became safer. Once, the Franks attacked one of the Muslim territories and Nur ad-Din was informed of that the very same day. Thus, Nur ad-Din wrote to some of his soldiers who were near to that country to counterattack the enemy. The soldiers did what Nur ad-Din asked them to do and defeated the Franks who wrongly thought they were secure because Nur ad-Din was so far away.

[256] Al-`Imad said:

Nur ad-Din was not used to reside in the city during the spring and summer seasons so as to maintain the frontiers and protect his territories against their enemies. He was eager to know about the conditions in Egypt. Thus, he decided to make use of the carrier pigeons. He asked me to distribute a leaflet in which I should mention the following description of the pigeons, "These pigeons are the posts of the news. They are messengers carrying secure and swift messages and they are the carriers of secrets within the shortest periods of time and to the furthest places. They are of great benefit to the Muslim fighters, informing them about the news, schemes, and ambushes of the disbelievers. They would transmit the messages of the Muslims to their vanguards and brigades. These pigeons are blessed in their flight, secure from danger, following the right path, honest with secrets and carriers of the disbelievers' news."

I was informed that judge al-Fadil (`Abd ar-Rahim al-Bisani) described the carrier pigeons saying, "They are the angels of the kings." He meant that they resemble the honest angels that came from the sky to the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Chapter XXXVIII

Another Incident in that Year (567 A.H. - 1172 A.C.)

[257] This year, Nur ad Din asked Saladin to issue a decree nullifying taxes in Egypt. This decree was read on the pulpit in Cairo following the Friday prayer on the 3rd of Safar.

Events of 568 A.H. (1173 A.C.)

In that year, al-`Imad had been appointed as a supervisor of Nur ad-Din's divan.

[258] Nur ad-Din was a brilliant and prudent man who used to put the right man in the right position; he was not to be deceived by appearance.

[259] Al-`Imad said:

On the 20th of Safar, I was with king Nur ad-Din in Damascus. I talked to him about the splendor of Damascus, the delicacy of its breeze and the felicity of its grandeur. But Nur ad-Din said, "I prefer *Jihad* to it. I do not like it anymore."

Chapter XXXIX

Najm ad-Din Ayyub's Death

[260] Najm ad-Din died on Tuesday, the 27th of Dhu al-Hijjah. He was tolerant, kind, forgiving, and hospitable. When he passed away, his son Saladin was in al-Karak and ash-Shawabak fighting against the enemies. He was buried beside the tomb of his brother, Asad ad-Din, in ad-Dar as-Sultaniyyah. Two years later, their bodies were taken to Medina and buried there.

Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

On his way back, he was informed that his father had passed away. Saladin felt extremely sad because he did not attend the very last moments of his father's life. Najm ad-Din's death was due to his falling off his horse. However, it was something predictable since he was dangerously fond of playing polo.

Ibn Abi Tayy al-Halabi said:

His name was Najm ad-Din Ayyub ibn Shadhi and nothing more was known about his grandfathers. He was just and content. He kept the bonds of kinship and was known to give charity frequently. He performed voluntary prayers frequently and was greatly attached to the scholars and was inclined to virtuous people.

[261] My father (may Allah have mercy upon him) said, "Sa`d ad-Dawlah al-Mu'ammili, one of Najm ad-Din's friends, said, 'I was informed that Husam ad-Din Sunqur, a servant of prince Najm ad-Din,

said: I was with prince Najm ad-Din when Nur ad-Din Zangi sent him to his son Saladin in Egypt in order to stop eulogizing al-`Adid during the sermons and to eulogize the Abbasids instead. When I was there, Saladin and his father Najm ad-Din were sitting on the same sofa in the House of the Egyptian ministry. The palace was overcrowded with many attendants who were delighted.

Meanwhile, a Christian servant of Najm ad-Din came and kissed the earth before sultan Saladin and his father. The Christian looked at Najm ad-Din and said: O master! This is the interpretation of my speech with you at the time of sultan Saladin's birth.

Najm ad-Din smiled and said: By Allah you are right. Then Najm ad-Din thanked, glorified, and praised the Almighty and said: The speech of this Christian was weird. It happened that when Allah granted me this boy (sultan Saladin), the ruler of the castle of Tikrit ordered me to leave the castle because of my brother Asad ad-Din's killing of a Christian. Being familiar with the palace to the extent that it became like my homeland, it was difficult for me to leave it and go to another place; so I was sad. At that time, I was informed of his birth which I regarded as an evil portent and felt unhappy. We departed from the castle while I was still pessimistic with the newborn child. This Christian was then my scribe, and when he noticed my pessimism, he asked for my permission to speak. When I permitted him, he said: O master! I have noticed your sense of pessimism about this child, what is his fault? What happened to you was Allah's Predestination. Then why do you not foresee that this baby will be a well-reputed and stately king? The Christian's words awakened my compassion for the boy. The speech of the Christian came to be true. The attendants wondered at that and sultan Saladin and his father praised and thanked Allah, the Almighty."

[262] Ibn al-Athir said:

In 568 A.H. (1173 A.C.), Nur ad-Din (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) marched to king `Izz ad-Din Qalij Arsalan ibn Mas`ud ibn Sulyman Seljuki's state which included Malatya, Sivas, Konya and Aqssra. He decided to fight against `Izz ad-Din and take control of his state.

Nur ad-Din intended to do so when `Izz ad-Din Qalij Arsalan headed towards Dhu an-Nun ibn Danshamand, the ruler of Malatya and Sivas and drove him away. As a result, Dhu an-Nun marched to Nur ad-Din asking for his help and support. Nur ad-Din hosted him hospitably, gave him presents, and promised him support and enforcement.

[263] Nur ad-Din never used to march to any Islamic state unless it was necessary to do so When Dhu an-Nun marched to Nur ad-Din, he corresponded with Qalij Arsalan and asked him to give back what he had taken. But he did not respond to Nur ad-Din's demand. Accordingly, Nur ad-Din marched to him and captured the provinces of Kisun, Bahsani and Mar`ash and the surrounding forts. Then, he commanded a group of his soldiers to take hold of Sivas. Being informed of Nur ad-Din's heading toward his state, Qalij Arsalan was horrified and marched to the middle of his state. He sent a message to Nur ad-Din asking him for reconciliation and forgiveness. Thus, Nur ad-Din ceased his march and reconciled with him.

[264] Nur ad-Din's message to Qalij Arsalan included the following, "I will reconcile with you on certain conditions and principles of which three are important, and I will never give them up. First, you must re-embrace Islam before my messenger so as to make it lawful to invest you with authority over the Islamic territories, because I do not believe that you are a true Muslim. (Qalij Arsalan

was accused of adopting the philosophers' atheistic ideologies.) Second, if I ask you for help, you should support me. You took exclusive possession over a great part of the Islamic states and gave up fighting the Romans, concluding a truce with them. You can choose either to provide me with your soldiers to fight against the Franks or strive against your Roman neighbors. Third, you should marry your daughter to my nephew Sayf ad-Din Ghazi."

Nur ad-Din mentioned many other things in his message. On reading the message, Qalij Arsalan said, "Nur ad-Din's main aim is to accuse me of blasphemy, yet I will fulfill his demand and repent before his messenger."

After his reconciliation with Arsalan, Nur ad-Din returned and left his soldiers in Sivas with Fakhr ad-Din `Abd al-Masih in order to serve Dhu an-Nun. The soldiers remained in Sivas until Nur ad-Din's death. When the soldiers left Sivas, Qalij Arsalan seized it again.

Chapter XL

The Conquest of Yemen

[265] Ibn Shaddad said:

In 569 A.H. (1174 A.C.), Saladin discerned the power and courage of his soldiers and brothers. In the meantime, he was informed that a man in Yemen had taken exclusive possession of it and seized its forts. The man, who was called `Abd an-Nabi ibn Mahdi, commanded the preachers to eulogize and pray for him during Fridays' sermons and claimed that he would expand his dominion throughout the world.

Thus, Saladin sent his eldest brother, king Turanshah, to Yemen. Turanshah was generous, open-hearted, and well-mannered, and I used to hear Saladin praise him. Turanshah marched to Yemen and the Almighty granted him an overwhelming victory.

Chapter XLI

The Crucifixion of the Yemeni Poet and His Companions

[266] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

In the same year, a group of the Egyptians gathered and conspired against king Saladin. They used to grieve over the extinction of their state and the poverty and humiliation they suffered. They agreed upon appointing a successor and a minister from among them and decided to correspond with the Franks to overthrow Saladin. They, accompanied by Ibn Massal, gathered their Egyptian supporters in a certain night to exercise their conspiracy and sent a message to the Franks informing them of the appointed time. But Ibn Massal went to Saladin and revealed the whole matter. Thus, king Saladin brought them all and ordered them to confess. They confessed and alleged that they had sought to do so because their work had been suspended and their property had been plundered. Saladin then summoned the juristic scholars and asked them about the legal rule concerning them. They told him that they should be banished or crucified. Hence, Saladin ordered his men to crucify them.

Among those crucified were al-Mifdal ibn Kamil, Ibn `Abd al-Qawi, the Egyptian prince `Abd as-Samad al-Qashshah, an Armenian Christian astrologer who told them that their scheme would be achieved through astrology, and the Yemeni poet `Imarah.

I was informed that `Imarah urged Shams ad-Dawlah to march to Yemen in order to give the Egyptians the chance to perform the conspiracy easily, i.e. Shams ad-Dawlah's march to Yemen would result in decreasing Saladin's soldiers and supporters.

[267] Al-`Imad said:

`Imarah was crucified in a place called Tarkhan in Egypt. It happened that he rebelled against as-Salih ibn Zurrik, the minister of the Fatimids, who captured and crucified him. As-Salih used to approve of the lines which `Imarah wrote against him. The lines read,

He always longed for a rank so high,
Yet he was hoisted with his own petard;
Nailed by the cross, he was really high,
Where his right arm never met his left.
Hanged is his head in a sign of remorse,
Blaming such a heart that stirred his lapse.

It was as if `Imarah was foretelling his own condition and the state in which he ended up.

[268] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

Judge al-Fadil wrote a message to Nur ad-Din explaining the issue of the persons crucified. He stated in detail that they had appointed a successor and a minister and were disputing about that. A group of

them wanted to appoint an elderly uncle of al-`Adid. Another group wanted one of al-`Adid's two sons, though they were still young, and they disputed about whom he should be. The people of Zurrik and Shawar each longed for the Egyptian ministry with no desire of appointing a successor.

[269] He added:

When they agreed upon that, Saladin was with his soldiers at al-Karak. The conspirators corresponded with each other and said, "Saladin is far from us; it is time to achieve our goal. When the Frankish king reaches Sadr or Aylah, the suite, the troops, the gathering Sudanese, Armenian throngs and all the Ismailites will rebel at once."

[270] He went on:

In the meantime, the conspirators corresponded with Sinan, the ruler of al-Hashishiyyah[1], telling him that they shared the same goal. They also asked him to send them a person to kill Saladin or to contrive a trick. Yet Almighty Allah was entirely aware of their schemes. Their Egyptian messenger at that time was Khalid ibn Qarjalah who was living with his nephew in the Frankish states. When this was disclosed, they were hanged on the gates of their palaces and crucified above the trunks of their trees. The Ismailites were banished and scattered here and there.

[271] Among the strange matters is that Nur ad-Din was informed about a wicked man called Qadid al-Qaffas from Alexandria. In spite of his being unknown in Egypt, al-Qaffas' call gained great momentum in the Levant. The Egyptians began to apply his misleading instructions.

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1. A Batini sect that was notorious for assassinating Muslim scholars and righteous rulers.

The people he employed used to grant him a part of their salaries and women used to send him a part of their wealth. When he was arrested, his house in Alexandria contained books that revealed his disbelief. Anyway, he was killed on account of his evil schemes and disbelief.

[272] Concerning `Imarah's issue, scholar Taj ad-Din al-Kanadi (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) said:

`Imarah has committed a fatal sin,
Paying homage to a heathen religion;
The Prophet's foe and nobody's darling,
He was a wolf in a sheep's clothing,
That was hoisted with his own petard,
Soon death knell would toll for the blackguard,
In Hell to be punished head and shoulders,
There he would drink the pus of disbelievers.

[273] In both his verse and prose, `Imarah used to exaggerate in satire and praise.

[274] In his praise of Najm ad-Din Ayyub, he said,

Among kings of the Nile I was so dear,
A fact for people is crystal-clear,
I was given to fighting the Egyptian fellows,
In battles that bred clashes and horrors,
Yet, their grants still reach me,
Which they give out of generosity,

I gave up heading to you when I knew
You offer your grants as a poor-due,.
Yet, I am not a tramp unknown
To wait for such a trivial gain.
I never looked for alms to collect,
Or were a crippled that needs such a gift.
I was rather the guest of the kings,
That can behave the way he wishes.

[275] In another poem he said,

The world's treasures have come in your grasp,
So don't eat your fill and leave us skimp,
At least you should follow your predecessors steps,
Whose memory is still fresh in people's minds.

[276] Also, he said,

Life is so cruel as not to expect
From `Abd ar-Rahim[1]*any merciful hint.*
May Allah have ample mercy upon him,
When enemies' slander of me is so dim,
I wish he would give a boost to me,
Since I'm suffering utter scarcity.

1. `Abd ar-Rahim is al-Qadi al-Fadil

I was informed that when `Imarah was about to be crucified, the people passed in front of him towards judge al-Fadil's house. `Imarah then asked them to meet al-Fadil, but the people told him that there was no way to go to his house. Then `Imarah said,

Abd ar-Rahim has vanished into thin air,
Of course my salvation is something queer!

[277] `Imarah was an Arab jurisprudent and a man of letters. He had written a treatise in which he described his conditions in Yemen and then in Egypt. He stated that he had settled in Zubayd for three years where he learned the *Madh-hab* of ash-Shafi`i (ash-Shafi`i school of *Fiqh*). He said, "I wrote a book on the obligations which people used to study in Yemen. In 539 A.H. (1145 A.C.), my father and five of my brothers visited me at Zubayd. When I recited some lines of poetry I compiled to my father, he liked them, and said, 'Behold O son! By Allah, literature is one of the blessings that Allah endowed upon you; so, do not be ungrateful to Him by satirizing people.' My father also appealed to me not to satirize any Muslim with even a single line and I promised to follow his advice. Thus, Almighty Allah was very gracious to me to the extent that I satirized no one save a man who satirized me in two lines in the presence of king Ibn Ruzzik, the minister of the Fatimids. Ibn Ruzzik swore to me to reply to that man. As a result, I did what he asked me to do and I satirized the man in accordance with Allah's saying, ﴿*And indeed whosoever takes revenge after he has suffered wrong, for such there is no way (of blame) against them.*﴾[1] And His saying, ﴿*Then whoever transgresses the prohibition against you, you transgress likewise against him.*﴾[2] This was the only time in which I satirized anyone."

1. Ash Shura: 41.
2. Al-Baqarah: 194

[278] It happened that when I performed *Hajj* (pilgrimage) with queen Umm Fatik, the mother of the king of Zubayd, she used to provide the prince of al-Haramayn (the Mecca and Medina Sanctuaries) with all the requirements of the pilgrims of Yemen. `Imarah mentioned that he achieved a high prestige with this queen and that he took advantage of her until he too became a wealthy and notable man. However, many incidents occurred which necessitated his escape from Yemen. He also performed *Hajj* in 594 A.H. (1198 A.C.). He said, "During that time, the prince of al-Haramayn Hashim ibn Falitah died and his son Qasim succeeded him and made me his ambassador and messenger to Egypt. Thus, when I came to Egypt in Rabi` al-Awwal 550 A.H (1155 A.C.), its governor was al-Fa'iz ibn azh-Zhafir and his minister was Tala'i` ibn Ruzzik. When I came to greet them in the chamber of gold in the governor's palace, I recited the following line:

Upon fixed resolve and iron will,
Thanks due to the gain they entail.

On hearing that line, Ibn Ruzzik continued to repeat it and the prominent men and princes highly appreciated it. They gave me some golden gifts. Ibn Ruzzik gave me five hundred dinars and a prominent person there gave me another five hundred dinars from the daughter of al-Imam al Hafizh. They hosted me hospitably; the princes of the states began to invite me to their homes and ibn Ruzzik brought me to sit with him and made me among his private associates."

[279] Imarah's poetry was very nice, but I do not like his saying: "Thanks are due to You" despite the superiority of his poem because he employed it instead of our saying: "Thanks are due to Allah". Thanks are due to none but Allah, the Great and the Almighty. His

saying was in opposition to the way of the early and late Muslims (may Allah be pleased with them).

Chapter XLII
The Death of Nur ad-Din

[280] Al-`Imad said:

On Sunday at the `Id, Nur ad-Din did what he used to do on that day. It was as if destiny was telling him that this would be the last feast of his life. After performing the `Id prayer, judge Shams ad-Din Muhammad ibn al-Muqaddim delivered a speech in Nur ad-Din's favor. Then Nur ad-Din's prominent men and leaders were walking and conversing with him. Among them was Humam ad-Din Mawdud, one of Nur ad-Din's prominent men. Humam ad-Din asked him, "Shall we be here on this day the following year?" Nur ad-Din answered, "O! You should rather say, 'Shall we be here after one month; one year is too much." It happened exactly as they said: Nur ad-Din died after nearly a month and Humam ad-Din died in less than a year.

Nur ad-Din fell ill and physicians suggested him to perform cupping, but he refused and no one could utter a single word to convince him because of his prestige. It was on Wednesday, the 11th of Shawwal, that Nur ad Din moved from the abode of loss to that of bliss. He was one of Allah's faithful and righteous worshipers. He had a stone bench on which he used to sit. When the earthquake took place, he built a wooden house next to this stone bench. There, he used to feel secure and to stay day and night to worship the Almighty. He was buried in that house.

[281] Al-`Imad said

O king whose days are still praiseworthy!
On account of his well-known generosity.
It is only since your grants ceased
That the virtue of generosity has deceased
Though owning the world, you came to discard
So as to enjoy your Paradisal reward.

Ibn Shaddad said:

Nur ad-Din's death was due to his being afflicted many times with croup that physicians failed to treat.

[282] Saladin narrated, "We used to hear that Nur ad-Din might march to us in Egypt, but all of my fellows suggested that we disobey and fight against him if this ever came true. However, I used to disagree with them and say that we should not do that. We remained confused until we were informed of his death. May Allah have mercy upon and be pleased with him."

[283] Ibn al-Athir said:

Nur ad-Din prepared his armies to march to Egypt to take it away from the control of Saladin on an account of the latter's refusal to fight against the Franks Thus, Nur ad-Din asked the people of Mosul, aj-Jazirah and Bakr to send him soldiers to protect the Levant from the Franks in order that he be able to march with his soldiers to Egypt. The main reason behind Saladin's refusal to fight against the Franks was his fear of Nur ad-Din; he thought that when Nur ad-Din gets rid of the Franks, he would take control of Egypt. Thus, Saladin preferred not to

eradicate them. Nur ad-Din, however, exerted a great effort to obliterate them. Thus, when he became aware of Saladin's disregard about the fight against them and recognized his goal, he prepared himself to march to and confront him; however, he passed away before doing so."

[284] If Nur ad-Din had been aware of the conquests that Allah granted to Saladin after his death, he would have been satisfied. In fact, Saladin accomplished Nur ad-Din's mission in his striving against the disbelievers. May Allah have mercy upon both of them.

Ibn al-Athir said:

Nur ad-Din was brown, tall, and beardless save some hairs around his mouth, with a broad forehead and beautiful eyes; he was a good-looking man.

[285] Nur ad-Din's dominion was so large that he had control of Mosul, the lands of aj-Jazirah, the lands of Bakr, the Levant, Egypt, and Yemen. People of different countries pledged allegiance to him and eulogized him on the Friday sermon. All the people acknowledged him due to his fairness and good conduct. He (may Allah have mercy upon him) was a peerless leader.

[286] After stating Nur ad-Din's good characteristics, Abu al-Qasim said, "In addition to Nur ad-Din's pervious traits, he was a prudent man and had clear-sighted views. He used to follow the good conduct of the predecessors and adhere to the path of the scholars. He used to trace the good behavior of his predecessors and follow their lifestyle to the extent that he related the Prophetic tradition. He who sees Nur ad-Din will immediately be astonished by his solemnity and reverence. However, on knowing him further, he will be greatly astonished at his modesty and tenderness."

[287] Nur ad-Din loved the righteous and used to visit them. He used to emancipate his slaves as soon as they reached puberty and marry the males to the females providing them with the means of subsistence. Whenever people complained to him about any of his governors, he would command him to lift the injustices. And if the ruler did not adhere to justice, he would dismiss him. Indeed, such noble characteristics, endowed on him by the Almighty, enabled Nur ad-Din to conquer many provinces, forts, and castles.

[288] Abu al-Qasim added, "Nur ad-Din's virtues were great and many people eulogized him. A group of poets eulogized him, but they did not do it properly. He was less inclined to eulogy due to his remarkable modest. He was born on Sunday morning, the 17th of Shawwal, 511 A.H. (1117 A.C.) and he died on Wednesday, the 11th of Shawwal, 569 A.H. (1174 A.C.). He was buried in the castle of Damascus and then his body was moved to a cemetery next to the school he had built for the followers of Imam Abu Hanifah (may Allah be pleased with him).

[289] It was well-known that Nur ad-Din did not like poetry. In fact, this was the tradition of `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz, the most ascetic Caliph. It was Nur ad-Din whom Usamah ibn Munqidh referred to when he said:

As sultan is ascetic, the people tread in his steps,
Surely, they are all inclined to do good things
His days are as pure as the month of the fast,
Devoid of sins, yet rich in hunger and thirst.

[290] May Allah have Mercy upon Nur ad-Din who used to spend the wealth of the Muslims on *Jihad* and whatever they might benefit from.

Chapter XLIII

[291] Ibn al Athir said:

When Nur ad-Din passed away, his son king Isma`il (king as-Salih), who was still young, succeeded him in power. The princes and the majors of Damascus paid homage to him for that. Isma`il stayed in Damascus where its people obeyed him throughout the whole territory. Saladin did the same towards him and the preachers and callers eulogized him and invoked Allah for him during the Friday sermon. He also minted the Egyptian coinage in his name. Prince Shams ad-Din Muhammad ibn al-Muqaddim was the one who took charge of Nur ad-Din's son.

Ibn Abi Tayy al-Halabi said:

After Nur ad-Din's death, the princes of his state held a meeting and agreed to serve Nur ad-Din's son, who was still young. They also agreed to set themselves against Saladin and arrest his followers in the Levant. They decided to reconcile with the Franks through prince Shams ad-Din, and they managed to do that.

[292] It so happened that the Franks moved towards Damascus while Ibn al-Muqaddim left with Nur ad-Din's soldiers and settled in Baniyas. Then he corresponded with the Franks for the sake of making a truce in return for a certain amount of money to be paid to them. After reconciliation, the Franks returned to their territories and Ibn al-Muqaddim returned to Damascus.

[293] When Saladin knew about the truce, he became furious and thought it was harmful for the Muslims. He made light of the people of Damascus and recognized their weakness. He corresponded with Ibn al-Muqaddim and other princes rebuking and blaming them for making that truce

Ibn Abi Tayy al-Halabi added:

The ruler of the castle of Aleppo at that time was Shadh Bakht, one of Nur ad-Din's servants. Shams ad Din `Ali, Majd ad-Din ibn ad-Dayah's brother was in charge of the army and the divan. His brother Badr ad-Din Hasan was the guardian of Aleppo; furthermore, all the forts around Aleppo were controlled by him and his brothers. When Shams ad-Din `Ali came to know about Nur ad-Din's death, he took hold of the castle of Aleppo. As a result, the territory became in chaos. When the rulers of Damascus heard about that, they took king Isma`il and marched towards Aleppo on the 23rd of Dhu al-Hijjah. Among those who marched with Isma`il to Aleppo were Sa`d ad-Din Kamashtakin, Jurdik, Isma`il al-Khazin and Sabiq ad-Din `Uthman ibn ad-Dayah. When they reached Aleppo, the people came out to greet them. That night Badr ad-Din Hasan prepared a group of the people of Aleppo to be crucified the following morning. Hasan went out to meet king Isma`il, and on seeing him, he dismounted from his horse and went with a group of his fellows to serve him. However, Jurdik caught him, rebuked him and took him captive. Sabiq ad-Din arrested his brother at once and their other fellows were captured. Isma`il and his followers marched seriously to the castle of Aleppo and arrested Shams ad-Din `Ali ibn ad-Dayah. They cuffed them all and imprisoned them in the well of the castle. They also arrested all the soldiers who paid homage to ad-Dayah's son and drove them away.

Events of 570 A.H. (1175 A.C.)

[294] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

King Isma`il remained in the castle of Aleppo. Saladin thought that after Nur ad-Din's death, Majd ad-Din's brothers would take charge of his son Isma`il. Yet, after the arrest of Majd ad-Din's brothers, Saladin felt angry and said, "I am worthier to take charge of the pledges. If those people continue to be in power, the Muslims will be disunited, Egypt will be separated from the Levant and the disbelievers will long to gain hold of the Islamic states." Then Saladin corresponded with Ibn al-Muqaddim blaming him for the abuse against the supporters and the rulers of Aleppo. He also expressed his regard for those people. Ibn al-Muqaddim, however, reproached him saying, "It is better that you do not make people say that Saladin longed to capture the house of the man who brought him up, provided him with all means of good subsistence, and invested him with authority over Egypt. This will contradict your good characteristics, virtues, and grants."

[295] Then Saladin wrote to him, "We prefer for Islam and the Muslims all that will bring them together again. We also choose for our kingdom the one who will preserve and guard it. However, loyalty is proven after death and the fruits of intimacy appear when the enemies' greed abound. In short, what I think is quite different from what those who mistrust me think; our goal is good. However, we should not call the reformist a corrupt person."

Chapter XLIV

Al-`Imad said:

Sultan Saladin resolved to make the matter right, but he was hindered by two things: first, the arrival of the fleet of Sicily into Alexandria and catching up with it and, second, attacking al-Kanz. The arrival of the fleet of Sicily took place on Sunday, the 26th of Dhu al-Hijjah 569 A.H. (1174 A.C.). It was defeated on the 1st of Muharram, 570 A.H. (1175 A.C.).

Chapter XLV

Attacking Al-Kanz

[296] Ibn Shaddad said:

Al-Kanz was an Egyptian who migrated to Aswan and settled there. He won the Sudanese to his side and gave them the impression that he would regain the Egyptian state. As a result, great throngs of the Sudanese followed him. When Saladin knew about that, he sent him a great number of soldiers from among those who enjoyed staying in Egypt and did not want to lose it. The soldiers, led by Saladin's brother Sayf ad-Din, marched towards them. He fought them and managed to defeat them, killing a large number of them. This took place on the 7th of Safar, 570 A.H. (1175 A.C.). And,thus, Saladin's state stabilized and remained in good order.

Chapter XLVI

Saladin's March to Damascus

[297] Ibn Shaddad said:

Knowing about Nur ad-Din's death and that his son, Isma`il was too young to control the territories and drive Allah's enemies away from the Islamic states, Saladin prepared his soldiers to march to the Levant. He equipped large numbers of his soldiers and entrusted some of his fellows with protecting and guarding the Egyptian state. He marched to the Levant with a group including his family and relatives, and began to correspond with the rulers and princes of the Levant. The followers of Nur ad-Din's son, Isma`il, began to dispute and to suspect each other. As a result, a group of them arrested another group and the others feared that the same would happen to them. Yet, this action made the people feel disinclined to Isma`il, and drove Ibn al-Muqaddim to correspond with Saladin. Hence, Saladin reached the Levant asking to take charge of Isma`il. He entered Damascus on Tuesday, at the end of Rabi` al-Akhir. First, he entered his father's house and the people of Damascus assembled with him feeling great delight. Then, he went to the castle of Damascus and settled there.

[298] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

When Saladin took hold of Damascus and its castle, he spread justice and favor, removed all traces of injustice and transgression and abolished all abominable acts, and prohibited the taxes which rulers had levied after Nur ad-Din's death.

Chapter XLVII

The Conquest of Hims and Hamah and the Besiege of Aleppo

[299] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

When the people of Aleppo came to know that Saladin had seized Damascus and the people's inclination toward him, they felt afraid and unanimously agreed upon corresponding with him. Thus, they sent Qutb ad-Din Yanal ibn Hassan with a message in which they threatened Saladin, "You took hold of Egypt through our favors and seized its palaces on account of our efforts. However, those who fought in your side will fight against you because you went far beyond your status and exceeded your limits. You are nothing but one of Nur ad-Din's servants and it is your duty to be loyal to him through his son."

[300] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

When sultan Saladin knew about the arrival of Ibn Hassan as a messenger, he received him and his procession and gave him many grants. After three days, Saladin brought him to listen to his message. When Ibn Hassan read the message, Saladin (may Allah have mercy upon him) did not pay any attention to him. Rather, he turned away from him and refused to reply. Then he addressed him kindly and delicately saying, "O man! You should know that I came to the Levant to reunify the Muslims, maintain their frontiers, take charge of Nur ad-Din's son and resist the adversity of the transgressors."

On hearing that, Ibn Hassan told Saladin, "Rather, you came to assume power, but we will not follow you."

Saladin ignored his words; he was very patient and made a sign to his men to take Ibn Hassan away. Then he ordered his soldiers to equip themselves to march to Hims where he took hold of the castle and entrusted some of his men to guard it. Then he marched to Hamah. When he reached ar-Rastan, its ruler `Izz ad-Din Jurdik left it and commanded his soldiers to obey his brother Shams ad-Din `Ali. Ibn Jurdik marched until he joined Saladin at ar-Rastan Jurdik agreed to deliver Hamah to Saladin and asked him to be his envoy to Aleppo. Saladin agreed. Thus, Jurdik marched to Aleppo and his brother remained at the castle of Hamah.

Jurdik marched to Aleppo and assembled with its rulers and king Isma`il. During their assembly he recommended them to reconcile with sultan Saladin. As a result, the princes accused him of attempting to make a military coup. They also refused his recommendation and suggested arresting him. King Isma`il refused that suggestion, but Sa`d ad-Din Kamashtakin insisted on arresting him. Thus, Jurdik was arrested, cuffed, and severely tortured.

In the meantime, sultan Saladin was still at ar-Rastan and one of Jurdik's servants met him and informed him about the arrest and torture which Jurdik had experienced. Accordingly, Saladin immediately returned to Hamah where he asked Jurdik's brother to tell him all that had happened regarding the arrest of his brother, and Jurdik's brother did. Then Saladin controlled the castle of Hamah, took note of its conditions and invested Mubariz ad-Din `Ali ibn Abi al-Fawaris with authority over it. This took place in early Jumada al-Akhirah. Then, sultan Saladin marched to Aleppo.

[301] The people of Aleppo thought that Saladin would never march to them, and thus they were taken by surprise when they knew that his soldiers were on their way. The rulers of Aleppo feared that the people would surrender to Saladin like the people of Damascus. Hence, they recommended Nur ad-Din's son to assemble with the people at the square of Iraq's gate. They assembled until the square was jammed with people. Nur ad-Din's son dismounted from his horse and addressed them, "O people of Aleppo! I am your ally, guest, and refugee. The old among you is my father, the young is my brother, and the junior is my son."

Ibn Abi Tayy commented:

Nur ad-Din's son was then about to shed tears and his sobs could be heard. As a result, the attendants were totally enthralled; they took off their turbans, began to wail, and then said, "We are yours and your father's slaves. We will fight for you and sacrifice ourselves and our wealth for you." They prayed for him and asked Allah to have mercy upon his father, but they stipulated that he would give them the eastern part of the mosque to pray in according to their ancient rite. They also asked him to give them permission to include a phrase in *Adhan*: "Come to the best work", and to mention the names of their twelve Imams during the *Adhan* and in the trading centers. Furthermore, they sought his permission to allow them to perform the funeral prayer by saying, "Allah is the Greatest" five times.[1] Nur ad-Din's son accepted all these stipulations.

1. All these things were the rites of Shiites, which Nur ad-Din (may Allah have Mercy upon him) had abolished.

Chapter XLVIII

Ibn Abi Tayy said:

This year (570 A.H. - 1175 A.C.) was very cold, snowy, rainy, and stormy. Saladin used to take ad-Dayah's sons as an excuse to convince those who would blame him for marching to the Levant to confront king Isma`il. If they condemned Saladin's action, then he would say that he came to the Levant to get ad-Dayah's sons out and to ameliorate their conditions. He sent his messenger to the rulers of Aleppo in an attempt for reconciliation. Sa`d ad-Din Kamashtakin refused; thus, Saladin intensified his fight against the country.

[302] The rulers of Aleppo spent their nights with king Isma`il thinking about nothing but how to assassinate Saladin. They unanimously agreed upon corresponding with Sinan, the ruler of al-Hashishiyyah, in order to send them some men to kill Saladin in return for large amounts of money and a few villages. As a result, Sinan sent some of his followers to assassinate Saladin. They disguised among Saladin's soldiers and then one of them rushed towards his tent with a sharp knife. When that man reached there, he was oppressed and killed by Taghril, the leader of the armies. The others were arrested and then killed, but only after they had killed some of Saladin's soldiers.

[303] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

When the rulers of Aleppo failed to kill sultan Saladin through the ruler of al-Hashishiyyah, they corresponded with the priest of Tripoli and promised him many grants if he managed to expel Saladin from Aleppo. This priest had been captured by Nur ad-Din since the defeat

of Harim. At the time of his imprisonment, he offered to pay enormous amounts of money to Nur ad-Din so as to release him; but Nur ad-Din refused. However, before Nur ad-Din's death, Fakhr ad-Din Mas`ud interceded for him until Nur ad-Din released him for a ransom of one hundred and fifty thousand dinars and freeing a thousand Muslim captives. It so happened that at the beginning of that year the Frankish king - the ruler of Jerusalem, Tiberias and other provinces - passed away. So, this priest took charge of the Frankish king's son al-Majdum; consequently, he took charge of correspondence with Saladin concerning the issue of Aleppo. His messenger told Saladin that the Franks were cooperating with each other and had become like one man. However, sultan Saladin said, "I am not of those who fear the Franks' conspiracy and I am here to march to them." Saladin ordered a squad of his army to march to Antioch. his soldiers attained great success and gained great booties. When they returned, the priest headed towards Hims to which sultan Saladin departed from Aleppo. When the priest was aware of that, he withdrew and returned to his country. Thus, the purpose of Saladin was achieved and he reached Hims, took charge of its castle and instated one of his followers in it.

Chapter XLIX

The Conquest of Ba`labak

[304] Al-`Imad said:

When sultan Saladin performed his mission in Hims, he went to Ba`labak of which he took hold on the 4th of Ramadan.

Ibn Abi Tayy said:

The governor of Ba`labak then was a Mameluke (servant) called Yaman. When he saw Saladin's large number of soldiers, he was anxious and instantly corresponded with the rulers of Aleppo. When they did not reply, he asked for protection and handed over Ba`labak to Saladin.

Chapter L

What Happened to the People of Mosul and Aleppo

[305] Ibn Shaddad said:

When Sayf ad-Din, the ruler of Mosul, became aware of the incidents that had taken place, he realized that Saladin had attained great power and enjoyed a great position in the eyes of the beholder. He feared that Saladin would grasp his territories; thus, he prepared a great army led by his brother `Izz ad-Din Mas`ud. They marched to encounter sultan Saladin and drive him out of their territory. When `Izz ad-Din reached Aleppo, Saladin was in Hims. When Saladin knew of their march, he went to meet them. The two sides corresponded with each other and Saladin exerted his best efforts to reconcile with them but they refused; they thought that war would achieve their ultimate goal. However, destiny had things in store for them of which they were unaware.

The war took place and `Izz ad-Din and his troops were defeated. Saladin captured a group of them but he released them on the 19th of

Ramadan. Then he marched to Aleppo and its people made peace with him in return for al-Ma`arrah, Kafr Tab, and Barin.

Ibn Abi Tayy said:

When the left flank of Sayf ad-Din's army had been attacked, he moved towards it to defend it. Then the rest of his soldiers thought that he had been defeated and as a result they were also defeated. Thus, sultan Saladin chased them and managed to kill a group of them and capture a large number of their princes and prominent men. When he returned, Saladin asked his followers to stop fighting and resisting the people. He distributed all the items he found in Sayf ad-Din's treasuries and ordered that his bondswomen and concubines be sent to Aleppo.

[306] When sultan Saladin reached the camp of Mosul, he found it exactly like a bar due to the wine and the enormous amount of lutes and singers there.

Ibn Abi Tayy said:

It was well-known that Sayf ad-Din had more than a hundred female singers. Sultan Saladin made that known to his soldiers and sought refuge with Allah from these sins.

Chapter LI

The Conquest of Some Countries Around Aleppo

[307] Al-`Imad said:

Sultan Saladin marched to the fort of Buza`ah and seized it on the 22nd of Shawwal, and then conquered Manbij on the 29th of the same

month. Prince Qutb ad-Din Yanal ibn Hassan was there at Manbij. Sultan Saladin paid him nothing and dealt with him boldly. As a result, Qutb ad-Din handed over the castle and all its contents which were estimated at three hundred thousand dinars. Then he went to the ruler of Mosul who granted him ar-Raqqah. Thus, Qutb ad-Din settled in it until Saladin regained it in 578 A.H. (1182 A.C.).

[308] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

When sultan Saladin took hold of the fort of Manbij, he ascended it and took note of Ibn Hassan's wealth and supplies. Among Ibn Hassan's property there were three hundred thousand dinars, silver and golden vases, arms and ammunitions that were worth at two million dinars. Sultan Saladin turned around and found the name "Yusuf" written on the bags. He asked about that name, the people answered him, "It is the name of a boy whom Ibn Hassan used to love, prefer and save this wealth for.' Sultan Saladin said, "I am Yusuf and I took the money that had been saved for me." The people wondered at that coincidence.

When sultan Saladin concluded his mission in Manbij, he marched to `Azzaz where he set up mangonels and exerted great efforts both in fighting and granting wealth.

[309] Al-`Imad said:

Sultan Saladin marched to the invincible and lofty fort of `Azzaz, and besieged it for thirty-eight days. He was anxious about the fort on account of the reconciliation that had taken place between the people of Aleppo and the Franks. It happened that the people of Aleppo concluded a truce with the Franks out of their terror and fury and released their kings whom Nur ad-Din (may Allah have mercy upon

him) had suffered a lot to recapture. Sultan Saladin, however, found it convenient to guard the fort. He seized it on the 11th of Dhu al-Hijjah.

Chapter LII

People of Al-Hashishiyyah's Second Attack[1] *on Saladin at `Azzaz*

[310] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

When Saladin conquered the forts of Buza`ah and Manbij, the rulers of Aleppo were sure that they would lose the forts and the castles they controlled. Thus, they once again began to set traps for Saladin. They corresponded again with Sinan, the ruler of al-Hashishiyyah, and promised him wealth and pledges if he sent some of his men to kill Saladin. Accordingly, Sinan (may Allah curse him) sent them a group of his men who came disguised as soldiers and mingled with Saladin's troops waiting for the right moment. One day, while Saladin was in his tent during the time of war, considering the conditions of the battle, one of those men struck him with a knife on his head. Saladin did not use to take off his armor or the iron sheets from his head fearing the treachery of the people of al-Hashishiyyah. Thus, the strike of the man did not affect him. When the man was aware of the iron sheets on the sultan's head, he expanded his hand with the knife and injured Saladin's cheek. The blood flowed and sultan Saladin began to shake and tremble. When the man realized that, he attacked Saladin and dragged his head to the earth to slay him. The people around Saladin were stunned in surprise.

1 The first attack took place in Aleppo.

At that time, Sayf ad-Din Bazkuj arrived; he drew his sword and killed the man of al-Hashishiyyah. Then another one of those people tried to kill Saladin, but prince Manklan blocked his way and killed him; yet, the man of al-Hashishiyyah stroke Manklan and injured him on the forehead which led to his death few days later. Another man came with the intention of killing the sultan, but Ibn Abi al-Fawaris seized him under his armpit and the man tied the hands of Abi al-Fawaris behind his back. Having entangled as one body, Ibn Abi al-Fawaris shouted, "Kill both of us!" Nasir ad-Din Muhammad ibn Shirkuh stabbed the man and did not leave him until he made sure he was dead. Thus, Ibn Abi al-Fawaris was saved. Saladin marched to his pavilion while his blood was still flowing. He was more cautious and set up a wooden tower around the pavilion in which he used to sit and sleep and no one was allowed to see him except his acquaintances.

The battle came to an end and the people were worried about Saladin and the troops were disorganized. Accordingly, sultan Saladin mounted his horse where the people could see him and the troops were quiet Then he went back to his tent. Afterwards, sultan Saladin fought against `Azzaz for thirty-eight days until its rulers were unable to continue and hence, asked for protection. Sultan Saladin took hold of `Azzaz on the 11th of Dhu al-Hijjah. He reconstructed it and granted it to his nephew Taqiyy ad-Din `Umar.

[311] When his mission in `Azzaz had been completed, Saladin was angry with the people of Aleppo on account of their alliance with the people of al-Hashishiyyah. So, he marched to Aleppo on the 15th of Dhu al-Hijjah; he collected its wealth, distributed its estates, and besieged its residents.

Events of 572 A.H. (1177 A.C.)

[312] Al-`Imad said:

When Saladin was at the borders of Aleppo, its people realized that the punishment would be painful and the result would be negative. Thus, they humbly implored him to reconcile with them. He responded to their demand and forgave them. Then, he left Aleppo with its provinces to king Isma`il, and moreover, he gave `Azzaz back to him.

[313] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

After the reconciliation, king Isma`il wanted to correspond with Saladin to ask him to return `Azzaz to him. Thus, the princes recommended him to send his sister, who was still young, to Saladin. When she went to him, he received her hospitably, granted her many things and endowed upon her the castle of `Azzaz with all its wealth, arms, provisions, etc.

[314] A historian said:

King Isma`il sent his sister, Nur ad-Din's daughter, to Saladin at night. When she entered Saladin s tent, he stood up, kissed the earth and began to weep over Nur ad-Din. When Nur ad-Din's daughter asked him to return `Azzaz to them, he said, "At your command!" Then, he granted `Azzaz to her and endowed upon her great amounts of money, gifts, and jewels.[1]

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1. This, in fact, signifies Saladin's loyalty to Nur ad-Din (may the mercy of Allah be upon both of them).

Sultan Saladin agreed to grant king Isma`il all the territories he had conquered starting from Hamah to Egypt in return for releasing ad-Dayah's sons.

Al-`Imad said:

The rulers of Aleppo swore upon all the things that sultan Saladin stipulated and offered their excuse for all the things that had stirred his wrath. The reconciliation included to them as well as to the people of Mosul and Diyar Bakr. It was stipulated that if any of them breached it and broke his word, the others would have the right to deter him until he became loyal again.

[315] When he reconciled with the people of Aleppo, sultan Saladin remembered his vengeance against the Ismailites who had caused him great sorrow. Thus, he marched to them on Friday, the 20th of Muharram and besieged their fort, Masyat. He set up large mangonels on it and fought against them forcefully, drove their cows away, devastated their houses and destroyed their shields. Then his uncle Shihab ad-Din Mahmud ibn Taksh, the ruler of Hamah, interceded on their behalf when they corresponded with him for that purpose. As a result, Saladin left them but after he had taken revenge.

[316] Al-`Imad said:

It so happened that the Franks raided al-Biqa`; thus, Shams ad-Din Muhammad (Ibn al-Muqaddim) who was the guardian of Ba`labak fought them. He killed a great number of them and captured more than two hundred and brought them to Saladin while he was still besieging Masyat.

[317] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

The Franks' raid on al Biqa` was the main cause behind Saladin's reconciliation with Sinan and leaving the state of the Ismailites. He feared that the Franks might control some territories in the Levant; hence he reconciled with Sinan and returned to Damascus.

Chapter LIII

Saladin's Return to Egypt

Sultan Saladin left Damascus on Friday, the 14th of Rabi` al-Awwal. He reached Cairo on Saturday, the 16th of the same month; he was neatly dressed and totally calm.

Chapter LIV

Selling the Books, and Constructing the Castle, the School and the Hospital

[318] Al-`Imad said:

The books that belonged to Banu `Ubayd were sold at the palace two days a week. They were classified in the best order and sold at a cheap price. The auctioneers of the books told prince Baha' ad-Din Qaraqush, the guardian of the palace, that these books were about to be ruined and should be sold quickly. Baha' ad-Din was a Turk who

had no knowledge on books, particularly the books of literature. The purpose of the book auctioneers was to undervalue these books and to gain a lot of money. Thus, a hundred thousand books were taken away and mixed with each other. Through abstracting some volumes of the same book, the auctioneers used to double their benefit: they dispersed the volumes of the book among each other in order to undervalue them when taking them from the palace, then they collected them from each other to sell at a high price.

[319] He commented:

When I came to know that, I went to the palace and bought a number of these valuable books. When sultan Saladin knew that, he gave me the price of these books which was only two hundred dinars and gave me some books from the palace's library. One day when I went to him, I found before him many selected volumes. I had previously asked him for some of these volumes and, thus, he gave me all of them.

[320] He added:

It happened that when the sultan took control of Egypt, he found that Old Cairo and Cairo had one single wall that was not sufficient to protect it. Thus, Saladin said, "If I single out each one with a single wall, then I will need private soldiers to protect it. However, I think it will be proper to set up a single wall around the two cities." Afterwards, he ordered his men to build the castle at the center, next to Sa`d ad-Dawlah's mosque on al-Mukattam Mountain. Yet, the circumference of the wall, which enclosed both Old Cairo and Cairo, was about twenty-nine thousand, three hundred and two cubits.

Saladin built the castle on al-Mukattam Mountain and established it in the best way as regards the fortification of its bases, the depth of

its ditch, the digging of its valley, and the straightening of its way. Also, Saladin dug a well at the top of the mountain to which people descended through a route carved from the mountain until the well. When the sultan passed away, there were still some parts of the wall unfinished.

[321] He went on to say:

Saladin gave his orders to build the school at the sacred Shafi`i burial ground. The ascetic jurisprudent Najm ad-Din al-Khabushani was in charge of that school.

[322] He added:

Saladin ordered that a part of the palace should be established as a hospital. He also endowed many donations upon the school and the hospital, abolished all abominable acts, spread favor among the people, and cancelled taxes. By doing so, he sought Allah's Help and Satisfaction.

Events of 573 A.H. (1178 A.C.)

Chapter LV

The Battle of Ar-Ramlah

[323] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

At the beginning of Jumada al-Ula, Saladin headed for the coast to meet the Franks at ar-Ramlah. The leader of the Frankish soldiers was

prince Arnat who had been sold previously at Aleppo, in which he was a captive since Nur ad-Din's time. There was great disorder among the Muslims that day. The Muslim soldiers were mobilized for battle. When they came closer to the enemies, a group of them suggested changing the right flank of the army to the left one and changing the left flank to the center of the army. While the Muslim soldiers were busy with this matter, the Franks attacked them; Allah the Almighty predestined the defeat of the Muslims. Then, the Muslim troops, who found no shelter intended to march towards Egypt; but they got lost and dispersed. Thus, the Franks captured a group of them. It was a severe defeat that was followed by a great victory in Hittin.

The battle of Hittin took place ten years later. The defeat of ar-Ramlah was in 573 A.H. (1178 A.C.) and the battle of Hittin was in 583 A.H. (1187 A.C.).

Events of 574 A.H. (1179 A.C.)

Chapter LVI

Canceling the Taxes That Were Taken by the Prince of Mecca from the Pilgrims

[324] Al-`Imad said:

It was the habit of the prince of Mecca to take taxes from the pilgrims, especially those who came from the west. It happened that when a pilgrim entered Makkah, he was not able to continue his way to the Ka`bah before paying the due taxes. If he was poor, the pilgrim

would be imprisoned and would miss the rituals of the pilgrimage. As a result Saladin said, "We want to compensate the prince of Mecca for that tax with our wealth. Yet, if we grant him lands and estates, he will make use of them and the people of Mecca will not benefit." Thus, Saladin agreed with the prince of Mecca that he would receive about eight thousand ardebs of wheat yearly in return for canceling such taxes. Thus, Saladin made a perpetual favor where taxes were cancelled; thus, the people felt comfortable and delighted, and gloominess disappeared. This took place in 572 A.H. (1177 A.C.).

[325] Judge al-Fadil said:

Among the great acts that the Egyptian pilgrims had never experienced and that no Egyptian king had received the honor to gain its reward, was the disappearance of the tax-collectors from Jeddah and the other coasts. In fact, there had been many grants that Allah the Almighty endowed upon His creation through Saladin. No one was worthier than Saladin to gain this status in Mecca and Medina.

Our master (Saladin) was entirely aware of the Franks' earnest efforts in Jerusalem both by land and sea, in war and peace, from far and near and their haste to help the people with wealth and soldiers. They did so although they had deviated from the right path. Thus, Saladin made great efforts to protect the pilgrims and to maintain the Islamic sanctuaries. When the taxes were cancelled, huge numbers of people intended to perform pilgrimage. In fact, kings spent wealth on their houses which later turned into debris, while Saladin spent wealth on Allah's House seeking His Pleasure and Satisfaction.

Chapter LVII

Some Incidents

[326] Ibn al-Athir said:

In 574 A.H. (1179 A.C.), prices increased in most Islamic territories; Iraq, Egypt, Diyar Bakr, Diyar aj-Jazirah, the Levant and many others. The price rises lasted until the end of 575 A.H. (1180 A.C.). At that time, the people left their homes to seek water, but they found nothing. Then, Almighty Allah was Merciful to His creation and caused the rain to fall upon them, so the prices were reduced.

[327] One of the strangest incidents that I knew about occurred during that year. When I was at aj-Jazirah, a miserable Turk came and I felt that he had just come out of his grave. He complained to me of hunger. Accordingly, I sent a man to bring him some bread. Yet, the man was too late on account of the absence of bread. Meanwhile, the Turk was weeping and rolling on the earth because of hunger. Then the man came with bread and the Turk ate, took the rest of the bread and left. Later the sky became cloudy and began to rain. As a result, prices became low and provisions were available. Yet, the price rise was followed by a strong pestilence resulting in the death of a large number of people. Then, Allah put an end to that pestilence in 576 A.H.(1181 A.C.).

Chapter LVIII

Constructing the Fort of Bayt al-Ahzan and the Battle of Humphrey[1]

[328] At the time of Saladin's residence in Ba`labak, the Franks seized the opportunity and built a fort at Bayt al-Ahzan. The distance between this fort and Damascus took one day while the distance between it and Safad and Tiberias took half day. Saladin's companions informed him that the establishment and enforcement of that fort would weaken the Islamic frontiers. Thus, when Saladin concluded his mission in Ba`labak, he marched to Damascus and settled there. He was concerned about the fort of Bayt al-Ahzan and resolved to besiege it. That year was so barren and Saladin's companions advised him not to fight at that time. But, Saladin said, "Allah commanded us to strive in His Cause and secured our provisions. Thus, His Command should be fulfilled and His Promise is guaranteed; we should do what He commanded to gain His Promise. Surely, Allah will neglect those who neglect His Command."

[329] Al-`Imad said:

The death of Humphrey took place at the beginning of Dhu al-Qa`dah. News came that the Franks had gathered themselves and resolved to attack the Muslims. As a result, Saladin gave his nephew Farrukhshah leadership over the soldiers of Damascus and ordered him

1. The prince of Baniyas who was appointed by the Franks.

to march to the frontiers of Damascus. Also, he commanded his nephew to send a message to him when the Franks drew near, and not to confront them until they came to the center of the country. However, Farrukhshah found that the Franks had mingled with his soldiers and the battle took place all of a sudden. Due to Allah's Support, the Muslims managed to kill the ruler of an-Nasirah and a group of the Frankish leaders. Then the Muslim soldiers sought to kill the Frankish king; but, Humphrey came to protect him and was himself severely wounded and two of his ribs were broken. The Muslims managed to kill a great number of the Franks and to wound the others severely. The Franks returned to their territories in disgrace. Thus, with Humphrey's death, the Franks became humiliated and defeated.

Chapter LIX

The Situation Surrounding the Franks in the Rest of This Year and in the Beginning of the Following One

[330] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

The Franks were staying in the fortress of Bayt al-Ahzan. Meanwhile, so much harm befell the Muslims. The sultan sent a message to the Franks telling them they should demolish it; but they refused to do so without compensation. The sultan offered them sixty thousand dinars, but once again they refused and continued to do so even when he increased the amount to a hundred thousand dinars.

This fortress was in the hands of the Templars[1] who supported the people there; giving them money and making them commit highway robbery against Muslims' caravans. Hence, Taqiyy ad-Din advised the sultan to pay a huge sum of money to the Muslim soldiers so that they would demolish the fortress. He did so as mentioned later.

Events of 575 A.H. (1179 A.C.)

The sultan was descending the hill of al-Qadi in Baniyas when he and the other Muslims agreed to storm the disbelievers' houses. They set off to that place on Sunday night, the 2nd of Muharram. When the sultan woke up, he was informed that the Franks had come out to fight. So he attacked them and Allah made him victorious. He captured their knights and soldiers, and they were defeated from the outset of the battle. Among the prisoners was the leader of the Templars, the leader of the Hospitalers[2], the leader of Tiberias, the brother of the ruler of Jubayl, the son of al-Qumusiya, and the son of Barazan (the ruler of ar-Ramlah) in addition to the horsemen of Jerusalem and Acre and other senior leaders. There were more than two hundred and seventy captives.

[331] Al-`Imad said:

I was sitting with the sultan, reviewing and enlisting the soldiers. By virtue of Allah's Kindness, the king's attendants - me included - amounted

1. It is a group of the Franks who abandoned marriage and devoted themselves to killing Muslims. It was established in 1119 A.C

2. It is a military and religious troop formed after the Crusades that took control of Jerusalem in 1099 A.C.

to about twenty people, yet we had more than seventy prisoners. Allah enveloped us with His tranquility, and the prisoners were really humiliated.

We offered *Fajr* Prayer and then inspected the rest of the prisoners who were transferred to Damascus. Barazan's son paid a hundred and fifty thousand dinars and released a thousand Muslim prisoners in return for his freedom. The Muslim jurisprudent, Diya' ad-Din `Isa, was one of the prisoners who were released. The son of al-Qumusiya, was ransomed by his mother with a hundred and fifty thousand dinars. The leader of the Templars was killed, and his people agreed that they would take his body in return for setting one of the Muslim leaders free.

The rest of the prisoners remained in captivity for a long period; some of them died and others were set free peacefully. This was the battle of Marj `Uyun. There were ten thousand enemy soldiers and their king was wounded and defeated.

Chapter LX

Destruction of the Fortress of Bayt Al-Ahzan in Rabi` Al-Awwal

[332] Al-`Imad said:

The sultan assembled a large number of cavalry and troops, and they headed for the fortress after the `*Asr* Prayer, and spent the whole night guarding the place as they were feeling apprehensive. They feared the Franks would suddenly open the gates and attack them. However, the Franks kindled a fire behind every gate to shield

themselves from the Muslims. The Muslims were reassured at this and said that they should make openings in the fortress.

The sultan sent all princes on a mission and he himself took control of the northern side. The fortress was wellbuilt and it was very difficult to make openings in it, yet by the end of the day the sultan had managed to make openings on his side and it was filled with fuel by Monday. The opening was thirty cubits long and three cubits wide. The gate was nine cubits high so it was not damaged. On that Monday morning the sultan wanted to extinguish the fire so as to enlarge the opening. He addressed his soldiers saying, "Anyone who will bring me a bottle of water will be given a dinar." Thus, I saw people carrying bottles of water and water-skins until they poured water into the openings to extinguish the fire. Then, the soldiers made openings in it and finally the wall was demolished on Thursday 24th Rabi` al-Awwal.

The Franks had collected firewood behind the wall, so when it was broken down, the wind blew and set their houses ablaze and a group of them were burnt while others surrendered. When the fire was extinguished, the soldiers entered and killed and captured their enemies. They took a hundred thousand pieces of iron (from all kinds of arms) and foodstuff as spoils and the prisoners were brought to the sultan.

The sultan remained in his dwelling-palace until the fortress was totally destroyed. Previously, he offered his enemies a hundred thousand dinars to demolish the fortress but they had refused.

Afterwards, the sultan invaded Tiberias, Tyre and Beirut, and returned to Damascus on Wednesday. Many people were afflicted with epidemic diseases because of the hot weather while many corpses were rotting. After conquering this place, the sultan remained there for a long period until he completely controlled the situation.

[333] Poets congratulated the sultan on conquering this fortress. The poet Ahmad ibn Nikada eulogized him saying:

The ruin of the Franks has come so soon,
It's now high time to break the Cross,
And if their doom was not in view,
They wouldn't have dwelt in "the Abode of Sorrows"!

Chapter LXI
Some Other Events of the Same Year

Al-`Imad said:

During the last ten days of Shawwal 575 A.H. (1179 A.C.), al-Fadil left Damascus and went on Pilgrimage, after which he returned to Egypt.

[334] I reviewed a copy of al-Fadil's letter to as-Safiy ibn al-Qabid in which he described the occasions that had taken place during his journey to Egypt by sea. He wrote, "We left Mecca on the 25th of Dhu al-Hijjah. In those days, there were many corrupt people and the Iraqi governor al-Hajj was humiliated; he had a weak character and this encouraged corrupt people to do whatever they liked while reformers remained intimidated and inactive. We arrived in Jeddah on Sunday the 27th of Dhu al-Hijjah. We traveled by sea on Tuesday the 29th of Dhu al-Hijjah and spent two nights; then the wind took us in the vicinity of Yemen, to a place called Dabadib. One of the two nights was a great ordeal. Allah is my witness, some of our young people became white-haired and so desperate that they wished to die on the

spot to be free of their torment. They thought they were doomed and blamed themselves, then they blamed fate. We remained patient until Allah relieved us of our sorrows, and we came to a desert, where there was no water to drink nor a camel to mount. So we sent a message to the people who landed on the shore of the Red Sea and they brought weak camels which were not worthy to be rented, because they knew we would be willing to pay more than their real price. We mounted the camels and arrived at `Aydhab (a port on the Red Sea) after ten days. Many people among us became frail due to hunger and thirst. There were a lot of people with us and there was not enough food. We traveled through the desert from `Aydhab to Aswan. We faced many ordeals and hardships that we had never encountered before. We only found two watering-places in eleven nights so we suffered a lot from thirst. However, Almighty Allah was most kind to us and we safely arrived in Egypt on the 17th of Safar.

[335] Judge `Ali ibn Yahya composed those poetic lines for al-Fadil:

Either going on pilgrimage, May Allah bless you,
Or making a sacred visit, sublime and due,
At times it occurs that you are found
Betwixt horse bridles or to spears bound,
Yet, at other times you are seen
Amidst Hatim and Zamzam serene,
O `Abd ar-Rahim, your feats do glitter
In the sky of glory like a sparkling meteor,
As if you had been created to worship the Lord,
And spread among people generosity and regard.

Events of 576 A.H. (1180 A.C.)

Chapter LXII

The Death of the Ruler of Mosul

[336] Al-`Imad said:

At the beginning of this year, the ruler of Mosul, Sayf ad-Din Ghazi ibn Mawdud ibn Zangi, passed away and his brother `Izz ad-Din Mas`ud ibn Mawdud took over.

Ibn al-Athir said:

Sayf ad-Din who was suffering from tuberculosis for a long time died on Sunday the 3rd of Safar 576 A.H. (1180 A.C.).

[337] He added:

Among the striking things that happened at that time was that when the people of Mosul were searching for water (and praying for rain) in 575 A.H. (1179 A.C.) because of the high cost of living in the territory, Sayf ad-Din went out in his procession. The people were outraged. They went to him, seeking his support and help, asking him to issue a proclamation to prohibit the sale of alcoholic beverages. Accordingly, he responded to their request. They entered the houses of the wine merchants, stormed through them, destroyed the doors and poured alcohol onto the floor. The wine merchants complained to the deputies of the sultan, and they accused a pious person called Abu al-Faraj ad-Daqqaq who did not commit any robbery but did pour out

any alcohol he could find. When the merchants made a complaint, he was brought to the fortress and beaten on his head until his turban fell down. Afterwards, he was released leaving the fortress bareheaded. The people there wanted him to cover his head with his turban but he refused and said, "By Allah! I will not cover my head until Allah takes vengeance from the one who wronged me."

Shortly after, the ruler who punished him died.

[338] This was followed by the illness of Sayf ad-Din who suffered for a long time until his death. He was thirty years old when he died and he had ruled for ten years and a few months. He was handsome, tall, with a fair complexion, and was ingenious and respectable. But he was extremely jealous; he never let his servants enter the houses of his wives; only lads would serve them. He abhorred blood-shed and usurping property.

Ibn al-Athir said:

When his illness got worse, he wanted to give the reins of power to his son Mu`iz ad-Din Sanjar Shah, though he was worried of Saladin Yusuf ibn Ayyub who held the reins of power in the Levant. Saladin had become very powerful and mighty, and his brother, `Izz ad-Din refused to accept this. The senior princes and Mujahid ad-Din Qaymaz advised him to allow his brother to succeed him to the throne because his brother was older and therefore more eligible. Likewise, his brother was known for his bravery, mental stability, self-control, and prudence. They also advised him to give his two sons control of a few cities and to make them consult their uncle `Izz ad-Din. He agreed and the people accepted his brother as their leader.

Chapter LXIII

Death of King As-Salih Isma`il ibn Nur Ad-Din

[339] Ibn Shaddad said:

He fell ill on the 9th of Rajab and on the 23rd of Rajab he closed the gate of the fortress of Damascus because of his severe illness. He summoned the princes separately and made them pledge allegiance to `Izz ad-Din, the ruler of Mosul.

On the 25th of Rajab, he passed away and the people were sad for his death.

Ibn Abi Tayy said:

`Alam ad-Din Sulayman ibn Jandar gave him a bunch of grapes that were poisoned while he was on a hunting trip. It was said that Yaqut al-Asadi was the one who gave him a poisoned drink. He was buried in a great shrine inside the fortress and people were sad for his death.

[340] I was informed that it was said that the death of king as-Salih in his prime was one of the charismata of Nur ad-Din (may Allah have mercy upon him), as he asked Almighty Allah not to torment any part of his body in the Hell-fire, and his son was part of him. He died very early having a good reputation after doing many righteous deeds and showing moral excellence.

[341] Ibn al-Athir said:

Before he was twenty years old, his health has worsened and the physicians asked him to drink alcohol as a medicine. But he said, "I cannot do this until I ask for a legal opinion." He highly regarded the Hanafi scholar `Ala' ad-Din al-Kasani, and asked him to give a legal opinion and the scholar said it was religiously permissible. But still the king said, "Tell me, `Ala ad-Din, if Allah preordained me to die soon, would drinking alcohol delay my death?" `Ala' ad Din said, "Absolutely, no!" Thus, he said, "By Allah, I dare not meet Him after drinking what He has forbidden me to drink!"

[342] He added:

When he despaired of ever recovering, he summoned all the princes and asked them to pledge allegiance to his cousin Atabeg `Izz ad-Din. He ordered them to give sovereignty to him. However, some of them told him, "Verily, your cousin `Izz ad-Din controls Mosul and other cities from Hamadhan to the Euphrates; so if you appointed `Imad ad-Din ruler of Aleppo, it would be better. He was raised by your father and he is your brother-in-law. In addition, he is extremely brave, intelligent, noble, well-mannered, and chaste." Thus, the sultan said, "I acknowledge all this, but you are aware that Saladin controls the people in the Levant except those who are loyal to me. So if Aleppo is given to `Imad ad-Din, he will not be able to keep it from Saladin's authority. If Saladin controls it, our people will not be able to stay with him. On the other hand, if I give it to `Izz ad-Din he will be able to guard it because of the large number of his soldiers."

The people who attended this meeting admired his opinion. They were surprised because he could maintain sound judgement despite his illness. He resembled his father in many ways.

When he passed away, the prince of Aleppo, Shadhbakht, and all the other princes intended to send a message to Atabeg `Izz ad-Din inviting him to come to Aleppo so that they could hand over to him the reins of power. He received the invitation while Majd ad-Din Qaymaz was heading for Mardin to carry out a mission. Majd ad-Din sent a message to Atabeg `Izz ad-Din advising him to hasten and settled at the Euphrates to wait for him.

`Izz ad-Din arrived at the place where Majd ad-Din was and stayed with him. Then he summoned the princes of Aleppo and when they came to meet him with all reverence, they pledged allegiance to him once again. After that he went to Aleppo and it was a memorable day.

When he crossed the Euphrates, Taqiyy ad-Din `Umar, the nephew of Saladin, left Manbij and fled to Hamah. The people of Hamah were outraged. They rebelled and raised the banner of Atabeg. Saladin was in Egypt; so `Izz ad-Din's soldiers advised him to go to Damascus and aroused his ambition that he would easily conquer it, in addition to other Levantine cities. But he refused and said, "We have a treaty which we should respect!"

He stayed in Aleppo for a few months and then went to ar-Raqqah and settled there. Afterwards, the messenger of his brother `Imad ad-Din came to ask him to hand Aleppo over to him and to take control of Sinjar instead, but he refused. Furthermore, he said to the messenger, "You must hand over Aleppo to me, otherwise I will let Saladin ad-Din take control of Sinjar!"

Thus, after many discussions he agreed to hand Aleppo over to his brother and retained control of Sinjar. Having done that, he returned to Mosul.

[343] Saladin was living in Egypt and he despaired of ever going back to the Levant but when he came to know the latest news he traveled there. When Atabeg `Izz ad-Din knew that he had arrived in the Levant, he gathered his soldiers and left Mosul, because he was afraid that Saladin would attack Aleppo.

He knew that one of his senior princes had crossed the Euphrates to join Saladin and that he had held a meeting with him. Thus, `Izz ad-Din lost confidence in all the princes. He returned to Mosul and Saladin crossed the Euphrates and conquered the Islands. He fought the people of Mosul, but could not conquer it. Then he returned to Aleppo and besieged it. Then, `Imad ad-Din handed it over to him.

[344] Al-`Imad said:

When the sultan was in Egypt and was informed of king as-Salih's death, he wrote a letter to his nephew, Taqiyy ad-Din who was the ruler of Ma`arrah and Hamah. He ordered him to prepare for war and to send messages urging his deputies in the Levant to be on the alert. His deputy in Damascus, `Izz ad-Din Farrukhshah who was in fact his nephew, moved on to confront the Franks in al-Kark. The prince of al-Karak hoped to control Tayma', but `Izz ad-Din Farrukhshah confronted and managed to defeat him. He sent a message to the sultan informing him about what had happened and in turn the sultan sent a message to Baghdad.

[345] In his letter he wrote, "We have been informed about the incursion launched by the Franks of Antioch against Harim. They plundered and robbed invaluable treasures. Our troops in Aleppo launched a raid against ar-Rawindan, thus, some of their people sought the help of the Franks. In an attempt to ensure their help they gave them a lot of information about us; they sent letters to

al-Hashishiyyah, and finally their malicious goals were attained. My nephew was not present at the time as he was in a faraway place confronting one of the Frankish tyrants who wanted to conquer Tayma', the entrance to Medina.

We were trying to protect the city of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) while the ruler of Mosul was fighting to maintain sovereignty over a city that was already in our hands. He was doing his best to take control of it by means of fighting and all kinds of transgression.

There was a great discrepancy in the way people were treated. Some people were striving against the disbelievers, while others were wallowing in luxury. It would have been much better if decrees had been issued ordering the ruler of Mosul never to go beyond the limits or to transgress. This life is short and every opportunity should be used to fight the disbelievers who are desecrating Jerusalem. Jerusalem witnessed the reign of many kings, but the people have despaired of purifying the city and they have lost all hope to free it of decadence and depravity."

[346] The letter also mentioned that Aleppo was only one city that the Commander of the Faithful, al-Mustadi' Bi Amrillah, had given to Saladin. Nevertheless, he left all the authority in the hands of Nur ad-Din's son for the sake of his father, so that people's rights would be safeguarded by those who deserved to take on this responsibility.

[347] Al-Fadil reported:

At that time our attention was turned away from fighting and wars. If we aimed to contend for the Cause of Allah, then Allah's religion would be spread and propagated in the lands where the polytheists dwelt.

[348] Then he said:

The people of Mosul exchanged letters with the apostates (al-Hashishiyyah) who considered them friends. They wanted them to intercede with the Franks and promised to hand over fortresses to them which already belonged to the Muslims. Thus, if three powers (i.e. the opposition authority, the apostates, and the disbelievers) came together against Islam, Saladin would not be able to settle down everything."

Chapter LXIV

[349] Al-`Imad said:

After the month of Ramadan, the sultan set out for Alexandria. He constructed the gates and buildings of the city and issued orders that the establishments be completed.

[350] The sultan said:

We visited sheikh Abu Tahir ibn `Awf and read some parts of the book of Imam Malik, *Al-Muwatta'*, during the last ten days of Shawwal.

[351] Ibn al-Qadisi said:

On the eve of Thursday, 8^{th} of Sha`ban 576 A.H. (1180 A.C.), Imam Kamal ad-Din `Abd ar-Rahman ibn Muhammad passed away. He was a great jurisprudent, philologist, and an ascetic, pious, amiable, and patient. He used to fast for many days and abstained from accepting grants from people. He always received students with great hospitality, giving them lessons for free; as he was seeking Allah's satisfaction and reward.

Chapter LXV

Sultan's Return from Egypt to the Levant

Al-`Imad said:

We returned from Alexandria to Cairo in Dhu al Qa`dah; then the sultan prepared for his journey to the Levant. He gathered his troops and their weapons then took half his troops and made the rest of them guard the harbors of Egypt. He ordered Qaraqush to complete building the circular gates around Old Cairo and Cairo.

[352] He added:

On the eve of saying farewell to the Egyptians, the sultan sat in his pavilion while the people composed poetry in his honor. Then one of his son's tutors recited some poetic lines to express thanks for the great favors he had done for them. For example, he said:

You should entertain the good-scented Najd,
Following the evening, no more redolent scent!

It seemed as if he was foreseeing the future because the sultan never returned to Egypt.

[353] He continued:

Sheikh Abu Muhammad ibn al-Khashshab related, "I arrived in Tabriz and the prince summoned me to his palace. He ordered his son to read me a lesson. So I said, 'Like father like son!' So one of his

attendant tutors responded, 'We can rather say: the whelp barks (like his father)!' I felt ashamed of his indecency and rudeness. Indeed, only eloquent people deserve to attend the meetings of kings; otherwise he should be cautious even in his sleep.

Events of 578 A.H. (1182 A.C.)

Chapter LXVI

Those Who Went Sailing Towards Hijaz

[354] Al-`Imad said:

In Shawwal of that year, the fleet of Husam ad-Din Lu'lu' that sought the Franks at the Red Sea achieved victory.

This story began when the ruler of al-Karak wanted to control Aylah; an island in the middle of the Red Sea He constructed ships and filled them with arms. Then he made two ships anchor on the island to prevent people from obtaining water. He ordered the rest of the ships to head out to sea to attack the trading ships and to kill and plunder everything. Afterwards they went to Hijaz where they caused great harm and the people of Medina were exposed to danger.

When news reached Egypt, the sultan's brother, al-`Adil, ordered Husam ad Din Lu'lu' to attack the Frankish ships and to save Aylah. Husam ad-Din managed to do so and captured many of them. He brought them to Egypt where the sultan ordered them to be killed.

[355] Abu al-Hasan ibn adh-Dharawi composed poetry for Lu'lu' following this victory:

A wondrous day has passed,
The inanimate objects almost
Showed happiness at last.
The valiant orderly brought
Captives in fetters well-wrought,
On camels similar to mountains,
The atheists are many like hills.
Praising Allah, I then said,
"Thus is the perfect Jihad"!

[356] The sultan sent a message to his brother al-`Adil. He wrote, "Lu'Lu' was an arrow that hit the enemies. Indeed, we could not ignore his feats; rather we envy him for his fighting skills in the Cause of Allah and his successful struggles. Those prisoners probed the weak points of the Muslims and endangered them. The people in the east and the west uttered words of blame and accusations. The land should be purified from their filth and the air should be cleansed from their dirt in a way that guarantees that they could never again reveal to the disbelievers the weak points of the Muslims."

In another letter to al-`Adil, he wrote:

We congratulate you on this victory. But why did you not complete it? Killing those disbelievers is mandatory; *Shari`ah* gives no room to pardoning them, and there is no privilege in keeping any of them alive. Moreover, overlooking them when fighting for Allah's Cause will neither be excused nor accepted. So kill them with a clear intention so that their likes will never dare to do such things. Indeed, it was a grave situation throughout the history of Islam. Nevertheless, Allah's kindness overwhelmed us at the hands of the person who deserved it most.

Chapter LXVII
Capturing Amid[1]

[357] Al-`Imad said:

The sultan set off to Amid and arrived on Wednesday 17th of Dhu al-Hijjah after taking the permission of the Caliph. He set up catapults and besieged the city. In the following year, he managed to capture it.

Events of 579 A.H. (1183 A.C.)

Ibn Abi Tayy said:

As the sultan was fighting the people of Amid, the enemy riff-raff fought back stubbornly and ferociously, so the sultan ordered that a threatening message should be sent to them: If they continued to fight, they would be annihilated. On the other hand, if they agreed to a truce and handed the country over, they would be well treated and they would not have to pay the previously imposed taxes and duties.

He ordered his men to put these parchments on arrows that would be shot into Amid. They shot many arrows into Amid, so the people stopped fighting. They advised their ruler Ibn Taysan to seek reconciliation and protection. The ruler was rendered safe and secure provided that he left the territory with all his wealth and without weapons and ammunition. He was given three days to respond. When

1. Now, it is a village in Diyar Bakr in Turkey.

he stipulated that his wealth should be conveyed, he sent a message to the sultan appealing for help, so the sultan sent him some youths, camels and a tent that was pitched for him in the outskirts of Amid. He transferred his money, clothing, and items of gold and silver. It took three days to do this with the assistance of three hundred people. Yet, he could not transfer even one tenth of his possessions. Furthermore, thieves stole an amount of money that was larger than what he had transferred; each individual stole half of what he transferred. In Amid, Ibn Taysan owned many fascinating possessions, including arms, wealth, crops, and books. Three days later, he set off for the Roman Empire.

[358] The sultan maintained sovereignty over Amid with all its wealth and provisions. He found crops and arms that had never been found in any other territory. In one of its towers, he found a hundred thousand candles and other marvelous things, in addition to a library filled with books (one million and forty thousand books). The sultan gave these books to judge al-Fadil. It was said that Nur ad-Din ibn Qara Arsalan sold some of the provisions and treasures of Amid, that is, what he would not need before seven years. When the sultan took over Amid, he gave the reins of power to Nur ad-Din Muhammad ibn Qara Arsalan along with all that it contained.

Chapter LXVIII
Conquering Aleppo

[359] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

When the sultan arrived in Aleppo, he summoned his soldiers. Many people gathered and fought ferociously. `Imad ad-Din Zangi

realized that he had no power to face the situation, so he asked Husam ad Din Taman to contact the sultan asking him to hand over the city peacefully to him. The sultan agreed and `Imad ad-Din began to transfer his treasures.

[360] Judge al-Fadil wrote:

We conquered Aleppo and captured its fortress. This guaranteed the conquest of many other fortresses, Allah willing. Its owner was given (as compensation) from this land what we had stipulated for him, and we were ready with all available ammunition for war in the Cause of Allah. Ammunition and supplies were in our hands and under our authority, because our aim in capturing the city was to capture its men, rather than to seize its property. We would rather obtain its thorns more than its flowers. The orders concerning Aleppo were carried out and banners were put up in all the precincts of its fortress.

The people of the city came welcoming us, as they regarded us as a source of benefit for them. They received the good news that they would have all that they had hoped for, as they were saved from what they had feared, and their ruler was compensated on condition that the soldiers were deployed to contend with the enemies in case of any sudden attack.

We shall get the spoils in our hands and the others will incur only loss. We have at our disposal all that we did not permit for the others, i.e. the soldiers. We imposed one condition upon `Imad ad-Din, which was to save us at the time of danger. We never lost a city except that the soldiers thereof returned to us. Rather, we left individuals in the cities who would bear, on our behalf, the task of supplying it with provisions and means of management and its troops would join ours. In this respect we remember what Allah said, ﴾*And fight against the*

polytheists (disbelievers in Oneness of Allah) collectively as they fight against you collectively. ﴾[1]

[361] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

On Monday 17th of Safar, the sultan went up to the fortress of Aleppo through the gate of al-Jabal and the people heard him reciting the following verse while he was on his way up to the fortress, ﴾*Say: O Allah! Possessor of the Kingdom, You give the kingdom to whom You will.*﴾[2] Then he said, "By Allah! I was never so pleased with conquering a city like today. Now I possess the territories, and my possession has become firmly established and stable."

Once I ascended to this fortress with Nur ad-Din (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) and I heard him reciting the same verse that was recited by Saladin.

[362] He added:

When the sultan reached the gate of `Imad ad-Din, he recited, ﴾*And He caused you to inherit their lands, their houses, their riches, and a land which you had not trodden (before).*﴾[3] Then he went to the shrine, performed two *Rak`ahs* with a long prostration. He returned to the fortress and exempted the people from paying tolls and taxes.

[363] He continued:

The jurist, Majd ad-Din ibn Jahbal, said that Abu al-Hakam al-Maghrabi interpreted the first two verses of the chapter of ar-Rum that read, ﴾*Alif, Lam, Mim, the Romans have been defeated*﴾[4], saying,

1. At-Tawbah: 36
2. Al-`Imran: 26.
3. Al-Ahzab: 27.
4. Ar-Rum: 1-2.

"The Romans will be defeated in Rajab 583 A.H. (1187 A.C.) and Jerusalem will be under the control of the Muslims." He provided evidence for this in his book. Thus, when the sultan conquered Aleppo, Majd ibn Jahbal wrote him a letter in which he gave him glad tidings that Jerusalem would be conquered at his hands. He also designated the date on which it would be conquered. He gave the letter to the jurist `Isa ibn Muhammad who dared not show it to the sultan. `Isa talked to Muhyi ad-Din ibn Zaki ad-Din about the contents of the letter and Muhyi ad-Din highly considered ibn Jahbal's knowledge and said that he would not have written this unless he was certain. Hence, he composed a poem in which he eulogized the sultan when he had conquered Aleppo in Safar:

Taking Aleppo by storm in Safar,
Heralds conquering Jerusalem in Rajab!

When the sultan heard these lines he was amazed. Later on when the sultan conquered Jerusalem, Majd ibn Jahbal congratulated him and told him about the letter. The sultan was surprised and said, "Muhyi ad-Din ibn Zaki ad-Din told me this before (in poetry), yet I will give you an unprecedented opportunity, that will never be given to anyone else!" Later, he allowed him to enter Jerusalem after the Franks had left and ordered him to deliver a lecture on jurisprudence while standing on the Rock.

All this happened later on and it was as if the unseen had been revealed to him.

[364] Al-`Imad said:

Aleppo was conquered in the month of Safar and Jerusalem was conquered in Rajab as Majd ad-Din previously expected according to the interpretation of the Glorious Qur'an by Abu al-Hakam.

Events of 580 A.H. (1184 A.C.)

Chapter LXIX

A Comparison between Egypt and the Levant

[365] Al-`Imad said:

The Damascene preacher Zayn ad-Din `Ali ibn Naja, who lived in Egypt, was highly appreciated by the sultan who endowed him with many grants and fiefs. The sultan used to consult him, and his wise opinions were highly regarded. In that year, he wrote a letter to the sultan mentioning the merits of Egypt and all its beautiful places. Also, he mentioned the beautiful weather in winter that was as tender as spring, its dust that was like a beautiful scent, its water that was as sweet as the rivers of Paradise, and its clay that resembled ambergris. He said that Egypt was better than the Levant and invited the sultan to live there.

Then, upon the orders of the sultan, I wrote to Zayn ad-Din, "We recognize the blessings of Egypt and its good weather. Nevertheless, the Levant is better; the hearts and souls are more attached to the Levant with its good weather and wonderful places. Damascus is the greatest city in the Levant; it has all the blessings mentioned in the chapter of ar-Rahman. Thus, after each one of these blessings we recite, ﴿*Then which of the blessings of your Lord (both Jinn and Men)will you deny?*﴾[1] In fact, the Levant is better than Egypt, as Almighty Allah swore by the merits of Damascus in the chapter of at-Tin, ﴿*By*

1. Ar-Rahman: 13.

the fig and the olive. ﴾[1] Furthermore, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, *"The Levant is (one of) Allah's chosen land, to which He makes the best worshipers yearn!"*[2] The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) chose the Levant as their dwelling place, and Damascus was conquered by Muslims before Egypt. Here we quote the words of Judge al-Fadil, "Damascus is eligible to be an orchard for Egypt.' Undoubtedly, the best place in a homeland is the orchard."

[366] Judge al-Fadil said in one of his letters:

When I arrived in Damascus I found its flowers were blooming, its plants were green, and its water was crystal clear. Moreover, I found birds singing and flowers nodding in the breeze. I stood in the middle of its valley that seemed like paradise, and I praised Allah Who created all these beautiful things. Thus, I composed these lines:

The soul passed away in great sorrow
Yet now, resuscitated in a new morrow

[367] I said:

The Egyptian vizier Safiyy ad-Din Abu Muhammad ibn Shukr described Damascus saying:

Damascus is a delight for the beholder, the pride of all capitals and the prayer-niche of the righteous who ask for Allah's Forgiveness in the early dawn. It is a perfect territory. Allah, the Almighty, honored it by mentioning it in the Glorious Qur'an and endeared it to His Prophets and the pious, as He said, ﴿*And We gave them refuge on high ground, a place of rest, security and flowing streams.*﴾[3]

1. At-Tin: 1.
2. Reported by at-Tabarani.
3. Al-Mu'minun: 50.

When Allah honored me with inhabiting its meadows, I headed straight for the mosque and found it beyond my imagination. The verses of the Glorious Qur'an were recited and the Prophetic traditions were mentioned by day and night. In this great city, Islam prevailed and ignorance vanished. I found among its people excellent jurists, men of letters, and scientists. They were extremely intelligent in *Fiqh*, *Tafsir*, and *Hadith*.

Chapter LXX

Incidents Which Occurred in the Rest of the Year

[368] Al-`Imad said:

In the beginning of Jumada al-Akhirah of the same year, the ruler of Mardin, Qutb ad-Din Ilighazi ibn Tamrtash ibn Artaq, passed away. The rulers of Banu Artaq supported Islam and controlled Jerusalem and defended it against the Franks before the Egyptians. Then, the Franks usurped Jerusalem in 492 from the Egyptians. Thus, the polytheists maintained sovereignty throughout the coast. However, Banu Artaq defended Diyar Bakr, Aleppo, and many other cities.

Qutb ad-Din controlled Mayya Farqin and Mardin. When he died, his son maintained sovereignty although he was only ten years old; then his cousin Nur ad-Din Muhammad ibn Qara Arslan ibn Dawud ibn Artaq took control of the fortress of Kifa and the cities in the vicinity.

[369] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

After the sultan had returned from the siege of al-Karak, the ruler of Irbil Zayn ad-Din sent a message to the sultan seeking his help. He told him that the soldiers of Mosul and those of Qazal had arrived in Irbil with Mujahid ad-Din Qaymaz and had plundered and burnt everything. Thus, when he received the news, he left Damascus and set out for Hims and then for Hamah where he settled.

Events of 581 A.H. (1185 A.C.)

Al-`Imad said:

The sultan traveled to Aleppo in which his brother, al-`Adil, received him. He mobilized his troops and headed for Mosul in the month of Safar.

Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

The sultan marched on until he reached Harran, then he left Harran on the 2nd of Rabi` al-Awwal for Ra's `Ayn. On that day, he received a messenger informing him that the kings of the East had agreed to fight against him if he went to Mosul and Mardin.

Al-`Imad said:

Then the sultan marched towards Mosul and camped near the city at the Tigris River in Sha`ban. Some weak women came from Mosul with a parchment seeking intercession. The sultan honored them and accepted their intercession. Then he appointed the ruler of Sinjar `Imad ad-Din Zangi to intercede for the purpose of reconciliation which was for the benefit of both sides. Afterwards, they managed to reconcile.

Chapter LXXI

The Reconciliation with the People of Mosul and the Sultan's Illness in Harran

[370] Al-`Imad said:

They reconciled and everything was set in order. Speeches were made in Mosul and Diyar Bakr in honor of the sultan. Also, dinars were coined in his name and everything was settled.

Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

The sultan fell ill and set out for Harran. He was very ill and frail when he arrived there and felt that he would die.

[371] Al-`Imad said:

The more his pain aggravated, the more his hope in Allah's Kindness increased; and the more frail he became, the more he recommended his soul to Allah. I accompanied him for many days. All the time, he dictated his will to me and distributed some of his wealth. His condition worsened and his physicians became desperate.

In the morning, delegates assembled at his door and made such an uproarious din that the deaf almost heard it. He asked about this and his retinue told him, "There are some delegates assembling at your door; they feel sorry that you are ill!" He summoned me and ordered me to write down their names and give them the money that was in his safe. By nightfall there was no beggar, nor anyone seeking anything at his gate.

Throughout his illness, he gave money generously to people. His moral excellence was even higher and better than when he was healthy.

Many people who were truly generous, intelligent, and noble gathered around him. They would talk about Islamic issues, provisions in jurisprudence, *Jihad*, poetry, language, literary meanings, and the characteristics of the heroes. The sultan vowed that if Allah relieved him of his illness, he would once again be involved in conquering Jerusalem, even if he had to pay a lot of money and sacrifice a lot of warriors. He swore that he would spend the rest of his life in fighting Allah's enemies, contending for Allah's Cause and helping the Muslims. Moreover, he vowed that he would always be generous and kind.

When al-`Adil, in Aleppo, heard about his brother's illness and that he had arrived at Harran, he went to him, set things in order and controlled everything in a good way.

Events of 582 A.H. (1186 A.C.)

Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

When the sultan felt better, he set out for Aleppo. He arrived there on Sunday 4th Muharram and it was a memorable day as the people were rejoicing because of the sultan's recovery. He settled there for four days and then went to Damascus. He arrived there on 2nd Rabi` al-Awwal.

Events of 583 A.H. (1187 A.C.)

The Battle of Hittin and the Conquest of the Sacred Lands

[372] Judge `Abu al-Mahasin ibn Shaddad said:

In Muharram 583, the sultan marched along with his troops until he arrived at al-Karak waiting for the assembly of the Egyptian and Levantine soldiers who were ordered to launch an attack against all the coastal territories on their way to al-Karak.

[373] Then, the sultan reviewed his soldiers in the middle of Rabi` al-Akhir and marched toward his enemies on Friday. He used to leave for war on Fridays, even in the time of Friday prayers, in order to find the blessing of prayer and invocation of the preachers on the pulpits, so that Allah would answer their prayers. He was informed that the Franks had assembled in Marj Safuriyyah in Acre, so he intended to go there. He went to Tiberias and gained control of it. The sultan was informed that the Franks were on the western side of mount Tiberias. He went there and both sides were ready to fight. Night prevented them from meeting and contending, so they did not fight until Friday morning. The two armies fought and clashed. Fighting continued until darkness. Each party spent the night anticipating that their enemies would attack at any time. The Muslims could not be defended by anyone save Allah Who predestined them to be victorious; Allah says, ﴾*(And as for) the believers it was incumbent upon us to help them.*﴿[1]

1. Ar-Rum: 47.

Their archpriest was the smartest and most sharp-witted among his people; he noticed the signs of defeat on the Franks, so he fled before the worse brought the worst, and headed for Tyre. He was followed by a group of Muslims, so he alone was saved and Islam was protected from his plotting. Many of the Franks were defeated and some others sought shelter in the Hill of Hittin. The Muslim army besieged them and surrounded them with fire. Thus, most of them died from thirst while some others were captured.

The archpriest who had fled, arrived in Tripoli suffering from pleurisy and died afterwards. The sultan ordered his troops to kill the leaders of the Templars and the Hospitalers who had previously caused great harm to the Muslims.

[374] Once, a Muslim caravan passed by the Frankish prince, Arnat in ash-Shawbak during the truce. Though they reminded him of the concluded reconciliation, he killed them and belittled Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) saying, "Ask your Muhammad to save you." The sultan was informed of what he had said, so he vowed that if he caught him, he would kill him.

Allah granted the sultan victory and enabled him to seize king Jifri, his brother, and prince Arnat. Then he gave the king a drink of raisins with dates and he drank it to quench his thirst. Then the king gave a goblet to prince Arnat. The sultan said to the interpreter, "Tell the king that you are the one who gave Arnat the drink, not me!" It was part and parcel of the moral excellence of the Arabs that if a prisoner ate or drank from the one who captured him, he would be secured.

Afterwards, the sultan summoned prince Arnat and informed him of what he had said, then told him, "Here I am, gaining victory for Muhammad (peace be upon him)!" Then he called him to embrace

Islam but he refused, so he unsheathed a short sword and killed him. When the king saw him doing this to the prince, he believed that the same would happen to him. The sultan summoned him and relieved his heart and said, "Kings never kill one another; but this person exceeded his limits so I did right!" The people spent that night rejoicing and their voices were raised in thanks and praise of the Almighty. At dawn on the following Sunday, the sultan descended on Tiberias and the fortress was handed over to him and he settled there until the following Tuesday.

[375] Many books describing that incursion reached Baghdad. We will summarize one of them although no one could properly describe the events of this battle because they were of great significance.

A letter reads, "The Muslims were brought glad tidings that Tiberias had been conquered and its fortress had been easily taken. The soldiers of the Franks assembled and fought against the Muslims; thirty thousand soldiers from the Franks were killed (the Franks were sixty three thousand) and thirty thousand of them were captured. A prisoner in Damascus was sold for three Dinars. The Muslim soldiers had a lot of prisoners, money, and spoils that no one could describe. No one was saved from the troops of the Franks except the archpriest of Tripoli along with another four persons. He had three wounds and all the Frankish princes were captured along with a large number of women and children. Everyday, the heads of the Franks were seen like watermelons. Cows, cattle, horses, and mules were not bought because of the large amounts of spoils."

[376] I was informed that a poor soldier captured a Frankish person and that soldier was in need of a shoe so he sold him in return for a shoe.

[377] Judge al-Fadil did not attend this conquest as he was in Aleppo. When he was informed of what had happened, he wrote to the sultan saying, "Verily, Allah made this True Religion stable at your hands! It was said: you became my lord and the lord of every Muslim. Allah let you inherit the two dominions; the dominion of this world and that of the Hereafter. I am writing this letter while foreheads are still prostrating and tears have not yet been wiped away. Many times I thought that the churches would once again be mosques and that the same place in which the Trinity would be returned to have said in it: He is the One, I praise Allah more and more."

[378] Ibn Abi Tayy said:

My father was told that a merchant had said, "When I was in Mosul in 555 A.H. (1160 A.C.), I visited Sheikh `Umar al-Malla. A man came to him and said, 'O sheikh! Last night I saw in a dream that I was in a strange land and it was as if it had been filled with pigs and it seemed to me that a man had a sword in his hand and was killing those pigs, while the people were looking at him.' So I said to the man, 'He is Prophet `Isa, isn't he? Is this al-Mahdi?' The sheikh said, 'No! This is Yusuf!' He said no more. Some people wondered at such a dream, and said, 'A man called Yusuf will kill the Crusaders!' The people guessed that this person would be Yusuf ibn `Abd al-Mu'min, the master of the West or the Abbasid Calipn Yusuf ibn Muhammad who had become Caliph that year. Then I forgot everything about that dream, but I remembered it again at the Battle of Hittin. This was Yusuf Saladin."

Ibn Abi Tayy added:

A wet nurse from Aleppo told me, "The sultan's mother said that she dream that she was pregnant with a great sultan. So it was then said to her, 'You have in your womb one of Allah's swords!'"

Chapter LXXII
Conquering Acre and other Conquests

[379] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

The sultan set out for Acre on a Wednesday, at the end of Rabi` al-Akhir. He fought the people there on Thursday, the beginning of Jamada al-Ula, and he controlled it. He managed to set all the prisoners free - more than 4000 - and seized all the wealth of the place, along with ammunition and the goods that were there. His troops controlled many citadels and fortresses in addition to great sites. They reigned over Nablus, Haifa, Caesarea, Safuriyyah, and Nazareth which had no men as they had been either killed or captured.

Chapter LXXIII
Conquering Nablus and Some Other Cities

[380] Al-`Imad said:

The sultan remained for several days, after conquering Acre. He pitched his tent on the hill intending to conquer other cities throughout the Coast. He had written a letter to his brother al-`Adil in Egypt informing him of his conquests. Al-`Adil arrived with his troops and, on his way, conquered the fortress of Majdil Yaba and Yafa. Then

many princes and troops headed for Nazareth and Caesarea and some other cities in the vicinity of Acre and Tiberias. Each group went to every side and returned with spoils and captives.

Fawlah was a well-fortified castle under the control of the Templars and it contained all their ammunition and wealth. Those who remained safe among the followers of the Templars handed it over, along with everything in Acre and Tiberias, to the soldiers of the sultan. Then Mozhaffar ad-Din al-Kawkaburi, the ruler of Irbil, went to Nazareth and controlled it. Some princes set out for Safuriyyah, Caesarea, and Haifa and managed to conquer them.

The majority of Nablus were Muslims and were the subjects of the Franks. When the Franks of Nablus were informed of the Frankish armies' defeat, they were afraid and determined to escape and leave the city to the Muslims. Then the Muslims living in the villages fell upon the Frankish residences, seizing their territories and possessions.

Husam ad-Din ibn Lajin, the sultan's nephew, asked him to grant him sovereignty over Nablus. As he was dear to the sultan, the latter agreed to grant him Nablus along with all its possessions and fortresses.

Chapter LXXIV

Conquering Tibnin, Sayda, Beirut, and Other Cities

[381] Al-`Imad said:

The sultan sent a message to his nephew Taqiyy ad-Din in Tibnin telling him to besiege it. He complied with his uncle's orders and then

sent a message to the sultan to come himself. The sultan arrived on Sunday, 11th of Jumada al-Ula, and the people of the city sent messages to the sultan asking for security. They asked for five days respite to go to Tyre without their ammunition, cattle or treasures, and their request was answered. They paid a large amount of money to ransom their captured leaders. Furthermore, the sultan managed to set free all the Muslim prisoners as he used to when conquering any city. That year, he saved more than twenty thousand prisoner. On the other hand, he captured a hundred thousand disbelievers.

Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

It was difficult for the sultan to conquer it due to the courage of its people. Finally, Allah gave victory to the Muslims who captured the surviving enemies. Then the sultan departed to Sayda and it was handed over to him on Wednesday, the 21st.

Al-`Imad said:

We camped at Sayda and the messengers of its ruler came with its keys. On the same day, he set out for Beirut and arrived there on Thursday. He besieged it for eight days and then the people of the city asked him for safety. The sultan answered their demand, and controlled the city on Thursday, 29th of Jumada al Ula.

The majority of the people of Sayda, Beirut, and Jubayl were poor Muslims living under the tyranny of the Franks. With the victory of the Muslims, they savored the taste of dignity after having been humiliated. The pulpits chanted joyful thanks and praise to Allah, the Almighty, and Qur'anic verses were recited and Satan became more enraged with wrath.

The Franks who sought protection headed for Tyre which became the place of their fraud and cunning; an escape route for their fugitives

and a shelter for the homeless, and the archpriest fled to this city on the day of their defeat. Then when the archpriest realized that the sultan was around, he escaped to Tripoli.

Afterwards, the Marquis replaced him in Tyre. He was one of the idols of the atheists, a most evil devil, the most cunning bear, and the slyest tyrant. He arrived in Acre unaware of the Muslim's conquest. He intended to anchor his warship and wondered, "We see that the people did not come to receive us." The people's clothes were different from those he used to see, so he became suspicious and frightened. He asked about the situation and was informed about the Muslim conquest. He was concerned about how to escape and after many attempts and plots, he managed to flee to Tyre.

Chapter LXXV

Conquering Ashkelon and Gaza

[382] Ibn Shaddad said:

Everything settled in Beirut, the sultan intended to conquer Ashkelon. He did not want to be preoccupied with conquering Tire after arriving there as the soldiers were separated at the coast seeking spoils; they were tired from incessant fighting. Furthermore, all the Franks who were on the coast gathered in Tyre, thus, he thought of Ashkelon, as it was more likely to surrender.

In this way, he gained sovereignty over many cities such as ar-Ramlah and Tibnin. He besieged Ashkelon and set up the catapult until it surrendered to him at the end of Jumada al-Akhirah. He stayed

there until his troops peacefully managed to take control of Gaza, Bayt Jibril, and an-Natrun.

Conquering Jerusalem

[383] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

When the sultan gained sovereignty over Ashkelon and its surroundings, he girded himself for this purpose and exerted a great effort to carry out his aim. The troops, who had been scattered along the coast, gathered and prepared to fight.

The sultan headed toward Jerusalem and arrived there on Sunday, 15th of Rajab. He camped near the western side and then went in a mission on the northern side on Friday, 20th of Rajab. He set up catapults and besieged the city. The Muslim troops managed to kill and capture many of their enemies and to control many fortresses. When Allah's enemies realized what had befallen them, they were sure they would undergo the same scenario like their companions, thus they sought protection. Consequently, the sultan took control of it on Friday 27th of Rajab, on the anniversary of the Night Journey.

[384] He added:

It was a great conquest witnessed by many men of knowledge, Sufis, and craftsmen. When people were informed of what Allah had endowed him with, i.e. conquering the coast, they all knew that his next destination would be Jerusalem. Therefore, many jurisprudents from Egypt and the Levant went to him. Myriad voices were heard supplicating and repeating, "There is no god but Allah ... Allah is the Greatest."

When Jerusalem was conquered, sermons were given and the Muslims performed Friday Prayer on the day of the conquest. The cross that had been on the Dome of the Rock was taken down. The agreement between the two parties stipulated that each man would pay ten dinars, each woman would pay five dinars, and each child would pay one dinar. Those who paid that tax would be safe and those who refused were to be taken captives. Furthermore, the Muslim prisoners - more than three thousand - were set free. The sultan collected large amounts of money and distributed them among the princes and scholars, and had all those who paid the poll tax taken to their secure place, i.e. Tyre.

I was informed that he (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) left Jerusalem leaving behind all its wealth. The amounts of money there amounted to two hundred and twenty thousand dinars. He left on Friday 25th of Sha`ban 583 A.H. (1187 A.C.).

Chapter LXXVI

What the Judge Mentioned Concerning Conquering Jerusalem as Simplified by Al-`Imad

[385] Al-`Imad said:

The sultan left Ashkelon with the intention of going to Jerusalem. It was as if Islam had been proposing to the bride of Jerusalem, trying hard to pay her dowry from the precious souls of the believers. His aim was to purify the place from the filth of the disbelievers.

The news passed promptly to Jerusalem and the Franks hoped they would survive those days. Balyan ibn Barzan was one of the lords of the Franks, and he, like their king, was tyrannical, not to mention the Great Patriarch. All of them were filled with anxiety. Balyan was preoccupied, the fire of his wrath was kindled, and the people could no longer remain in their houses. They contemplated their situation and thought about escape. In the end, they agreed that they should sacrifice their souls for the sake of the city and said, "Here we are sloughing off our heads, shedding blood, tolerating our painful wounds and sacrificing our souls. In this place, there is the Church of the Holy Sepulcher from which we will be resurrected and receive our rewards. Thus, honoring this place endows us with dignity, saving it grants us safety, and maintaining its integrity and eternity will, in turn, give us eternity. If we forsake the place, we will be blameworthy. In it, we are endowed with the synod, the temple, the pictures and formations, views and allegories, images and eidolons, pillars and tablets, bodies and souls, disciples' images in their dialogue, bishops in their tales, monks in their hermitages, priests in their churches, the altar and the Holy Birth, the Table and the Fish, the disciple and the tutor, the Cradle and the speaking baby-boy, and the images of the ram and the donkey, Paradise and Hell, bells and the holy codes! "

Moreover, they said, "In this place, Jesus Christ was crucified and was brought near to Divinity; the light descended, all darkness was removed, and the Virgin was in labor with her son. In defending the Shrine of our Lord we die, and for fear of losing it, we lose our souls. We should protect it and debate and argue in its favor; How come we do not do this? How come we do not compete or vie with enemies? And for what virtue do we allow them to take it and hold sovereignty over what we usurped from them?"

They prepared themselves and vied with one another. They set up catapults on gates, as their devils became furious, and their priests urged them on. When their spies brought evil news to them, they dug a ditch and a deep pit, establishing, in every place a secure corner, distributing in each tower a group of troops, bearing things that had been unbearable before.

Afterwards, the sultan came with his brave heroes, his sons and brothers, and the cadets of his slaves and Mamelukes, the noble princes and great lords. He asked about al-Aqsa Mosque and the nearest means to go to it, mentioning the good results of what Allah would open and grant them and said, "If Allah endows us with the honor of expelling His enemies from Jerusalem, how blessed we will be! It has been in the grip of atheism for ninety-one years, so Allah might not accept a good deed from a worshiper. Allah saved the virtue of freeing it for the Ayyubid dynasty so that Allah would gather their hearts with acceptance."

Why is it that he was not concerned about conquering the insurmountable Jerusalem and al-Aqsa Mosque that had been originally established on piety? It had been the dwelling place of the prophets, the standing place of the pious, the niche of the worshiper, the shrine of the angels, the place of Doomsday and Resurrection, and the place whereto Allah's Messenger's Ascension to the seven heavens began, and the lofty Dome that had been like a crown on its head, and from there the Night Journey began with the resplendent light that roamed everywhere. Part of its gates was the gate of mercy and whoever entered through it to Paradise would attain eternity. There was also Solomon's throne and David's Temple. It is the first *Qiblah* (direction to which the Muslims turn in prayer) and the second of the two Houses built on earth, and the third Sacred Mosque. Moreover, it is one of the three mosques mentioned in the Prophet's *hadith* that the

people are permitted to travel on a journey to it. Allah honored it by mentioning it with His best Creation, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), at the beginning of the chapter of al-Isra'; as He says, ﴾*Glorified be He (Allah) Who took His slave for a journey by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa.*﴿

Indeed, it has uncountable excellent attributes and merits; from it the Night Journey began and to its lands the heaven was opened. It contains the tombstones of the martyrs, the miracles of the honored, and signs of the scholars of jurisprudence. In this place, Allah's Prophet (peace be upon him) led the other Prophets in prayer and accompanied the angel Jibril and ascended from there to the uppermost Heavens. Also, in this place there is Mary's Mihrab (prayer area) that was established by David as Solomon recommended. How great and sublime! How honored and revered! Verily, it was, and always will be, lofty and exquisite, resplendent and honored, with blessed boon, and auspicious benediction! Moreover, everything therein has been kept in its best condition, the most exquisite beauty, and adorned joy! How many are the signs that Allah showed to His Messenger in this place!

Thus, the sultan swore that he would not leave the place until he had fulfilled his oath (to conquer it).

Chapter LXXVII
The Sultan's Besiege of Jerusalem

[386] Al-'Imad said:

When they were tormented by war, they consulted one another and said, "We seek nothing but safety." Yet, the sultan insisted on fighting

and said, "I will not hold sovereignty over Jerusalem except in the same way that it had been usurped from the Muslims ninety-one years ago. They brutally killed Muslims; therefore, I will murder their men and take their women captives!"

Ibn Barzan went to the sultan asking for the protection of his people and himself, but the sultan refrained from responding to his request and said, "You are neither trustworthy nor honest. We would like to make your punishment continual, take hold of your kingdom by force and kill you!" Thus, the frustrated enemies warned him about the consequences of taking a decision without thinking it over properly. They said, "If we despair of having security from you, fear your sovereignty and give up your grants, there will be no reconciliation, peace, or dignity. We will make up our minds and kill ferociously and regretfully. We will face existence with annihilation, throwing ourselves into the fire of battle instead of throwing ourselves into perdition and shame; if a man from amongst us is wounded he will kill ten men among you in return. We will set fire to houses, ruin the Dome, kill your captives and uproot the Rock. We have five thousand Muslims captives; some of them are rich, and some are poor, some are old and some are young. We will squander the money, and will not give it to you; as for our progeny and descendents we hasten to execute them so that you will gain no benefit from them."

Therefore, the sultan consulted his companions and they told him, "We should consider them as prisoners of war. We should accept their request and levy on them the poll tax."

After extensive negotiation and debate, the enemies agreed to pay the due tax in return for their safety. The Muslims stipulated that after forty days if anyone was unable to pay the poll tax or refrained from paying it, then that person would be taken as a prisoner of war. Every

man was to pay ten dinars, every woman five dinars, and every child two dinars.

Ibn Barzan, the Patriarch along with the majors of the Templars took part in formulating this agreement. Ibn Barzan paid thirty thousand dinars for the taxes of the poor. Everyone who paid the due money would be able to leave his house safe and secure, and would never return to it again. They handed over the city on Friday 27th of Rajab and it contained more than a hundred thousand people. The deputies prepared to check them and collect taxes from them. Whoever paid the due amount of money departed safely and he who refused was imprisoned.

In Jerusalem, there was a Roman queen who had devoted her life to the church and the cross. She was angry because of her ordeal and she continued to adhere to her religion but used to sigh sorrowfully and shed many tears. She had wealth, prestige, provisions, possessions, and followers, so she sought refuge in the sultan and he granted her safety. He set her (and all her company) free, permitted her to take all her wealth and jewelry including golden crosses, gems, and precious stones. Therefore, she left with all her followers, wealth, and possessions.

The daughter of king Amari and the wife of the captured king, were residing in the vicinity of Jerusalem with their wealth, servants, and bondmaids. She asked for permission to join her husband who was imprisoned in a tower in Nablus and she was permitted. Therefore, she resided with those who were with her at her husband's place.

The princess who was the mother of Humphrey and the wife of the prince whose blood had been shed on the day of Hittin, came and asked the sultan to set her son free. She was promised to have that if

she gave over her fortresses. Thus, Humphrey was brought from Damascus to her and she was relieved on seeing him. The man who accompanied both of them was one of the trustworthy princes who was about to take control of those fortresses. She left to her fortresses to give them over to him, but the men prevented her from doing so and defended the city. She did not manage to fulfill the condition; thus she resided in Tyre, and entrusted her imprisoned son to the sultan who promised her to set him free if he took control of those fortresses.

Chapter LXXVIII

What Happened on the Day of the Conquest

[387] Al-`Imad said:

The Muslims took control of the city on Friday at the time when the Prayer was due. The banners of an-Nasir were raised on the balconies, and then the gates were closed to enable the Muslims to collect the poll tax. The time of performing the obligatory prayers came and it was very difficult for them to perform them, as the Friday Prayer had some preparations and conditions that were not fulfilled. Al-Aqsa Mosque was full of pigs and corruption. The place was badly affected and the site was inundated with all kinds of impurities. Thus, the people gave priority to cleaning the place.

Jerusalem was conquered on the anniversary of the Night Journey and this great conquest was achieved by virtue of a crafty strategy. The sultan sat in a tent in the outskirts of Jerusalem to receive the chiefs, princes, Sufis, and scholars who came to congratulate him. He

was modest and distinctly dignified in the presence of the jurisprudents and men of knowledge, as they were his righteous guests. His face was illuminated with the light of happiness, his door was always open, he gave out many grants, and his orders were obeyed.

The reciters (of the Glorious Qur'an) attended his assembly reciting the Glorious Qur'an repeatedly, while poets composed and recited poems. The attendants shed tears of joy, their hearts felt humble, and the believers' tongues begged Allah, the Great and Almighty.

[388] He added:

On that day, I wrote about seventy letters to the rulers and every letter had magnificent rhetorical meanings. I sent one of them to the prince in Baghdad in which I said, "Almighty Allah says, ﴿*Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds that will certainly grant them succession in the land, as he granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion which He has chosen for them. And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear.*'﴾[1]

Praise be to Allah who granted His righteous worshipers the promise of succession in the land, as He ordained that the Muslims would fight the disbelievers. He granted to our mighty sultan this promise of succession, giving him the authority to practice the religion, and granting him in exchange safety after fear. He preserved his great conquest and magnificent victory to the reign of king an-Nasir (Saladin) who follows the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) and finds great dignity and might in having obtained this victory. All previous kings of past centuries regretted that they could not achieve this long sought goal.

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1. An-Nur: 55

Praise be to Allah who saved the sacred place of Jerusalem and protected it from impurities, thus, making us attain all that we had hoped for and replacing heresy with righteousness under the shade of Islam. He (Exalted and Glorified be He) made the dignified conditions of these days obliterate the humiliation of the past and ordained that the jurisprudents and scholars should live therein after the ignorance and aberration of the Patriarch had prevailed, the worshipers of the cross and the sun. Moreover, He predestined that the straying polytheists should be defeated by faithful and wise soldiers.

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, the Lord of mankind, Jinn and all that exists. It is as if Allah honored this nation and told it, 'Be intent to acquire this virtue by which I honored you!' True is the Word of Allah, as the Qur'anic verse reads, ﴾*Enter the sacred land which Allah has assigned to you.*﴿[1] As it came to be when He expelled from Jerusalem on Friday those who sanctify Sunday (i.e. the Christians), oppressing those who said: God is a third of the three (in a Trinity), and replacing them with: He is Allah, the One! He helped them by sending down angels and the Holy Spirit, and ordained this great victory, which has been the greatest conquest.

All plains and high lands in Jordan and Palestine were controlled and possessed by Muslims, as Islam became widespread after heresy had prevailed. All praise and thanks are due to Allah, as the Muslims renew for Islam a new victory everyday. The cry of the Sacred Rock was answered, all the faults and sins were cleansed by tears, the din was abated and replaced with tranquility, and joviality replaced despondency and regret. All Praise is due to Allah for this victory, as He granted the Muslims this great triumph.

1. Al-Ma'idah: 21.

Chapter LXXIX

[389] Al-`Imad said:

The venerable minister Najm ad-Din Yusuf ibn al-Husayn composed a poem and passed it to me. I showed it to the sultan in Jerusalem and cited these lines:

Time is short for hearing a poem
Designed for praising a slender, lissome man,
In an age whose gravity reins supreme,
While drollery and enticement are totally unseen,
By virtue of the guided Yusuf who leads
The nation to the glorious paths of Jihad,
He, having full trust in Allah; his Lord,
Is confident, triumphant and true to his word,
Maintaining Monotheism by fighting trinity,
And applying to the polytheists their due penalty,
A king well-practiced in the arena of war,
Though - during peace - he is a plain austere.
The only guardian of our seashores,
Always on the alert for gathering storms,
He opened the green girdle of the coastal towns,
A feather in his cap that was awe-inspiring,

He revived the religion of Muhammad and set right
A path long corrupted and losing bright.

[390] He added:

The Iraqi poet, Abu `Ali al-Hasan ibn `Ali al-Juwayni, who was dwelling in Egypt, used to pass me his poems so that I would show them to the sultan. He sent a poem in which he mentioned the Muslim kings who had neglected conquering this city for ninety years until our sultan managed to do so. Here is some lines of this poem:

The king is supported by the angels of heaven,
A claim that is now undoubtedly proven,
His glories for people are all first rate,
It's something unparalleled in our book of fate,
A triumph assigned to the Prophets alone,
A favor acknowledged by deeds uncommon.
The kings of the Franks are his favorite prey,
Though their might is beyond dubiety,
Many potent kings due to fearing the Franks
Are turned chickens and scaredy-cats,
Tripoli has cried for the help of Malik Shah,
Who took up the case and stunned all foes.
Though kings after him would behold
Islam desecrated and feel no concern,
For twenty and over the land has cried
For help and Muslims are all stone-blind,

But now Saladin has answered their call,
Obeying the supporter of the Muslims all,
Assigned for Naser were all these triumphs and yet,
No king had aspired to gain such a hit.
Almighty has bestowed on him quelling victory,
Bringing to the minds Dawud's and Solayman's mastery,
In only half a month put to an end
To all polytheists and purified the land,
Now, where is Maslamah and all his brothers,
Where are his fathers or even their forebears!
No other line of kings could even dare to liquidate,
The enemies of the Franks, whose power is great,
Were such a conquest at the time of the Prophet,
Verses would have been revealed on the occasion.
How ugly are the faces of worshipers of the cross,
They would soon be covered in utter despicableness,
You sought you reward from Almighty, the Great,
While other kings can never obtain such a fate,
May Allah keep you safe as a guardian of Islam,
Lest it should be defiled by the atheists' oppression,
How honorable is such an ancient convention,
Believers in the lead and atheists dead to the world,
Oh you who have united believers and bridled
Heretics who, worshipping the cross, are unguided.

When the page of our life is folded by the Lord,
Who - but He - can measure Saladin's reward.

[391] The Egyptian poet Muhammad ibn As`ad ibn `Ali ibn Mu`ammar composed a poem in which he said:

What about a dream in which I have seen
Jerusalem conquered and the Franks beaten!
And the dirt around it is totally removed,
By ruining temples for a long time raised,
There king I saw in fetters tight bound,
Never before a king of the Franks was captured,
The victory of the Lord has come and such a promise
Was given to the Prophet so ask for Almighty's forgiveness,
The Levant is opened and Jerusalem is now purified,
A land that - for people - would be the Resurrection ground,
In conquering it the king is like,
The Companions `Umar, `Ali and the like,
Islam has plumed itself on such a king,
And the world takes him as a blessing,
His fight in the battlefield is so harmonious,
Like poetic words pleasurable and melodious,
The enemies are submissive and their necks are cut,
Deviating are their gazes and their faces in dust,
His raids are prosperous and his top seed,
Where he surely makes the enemies' necks bleed.

Chapter LXXX

Performing the Friday Prayer in al-Aqsa Mosque

[392] Al-'Imad said:

When the sultan gained control over Jerusalem, he issued his orders to reveal the Mihrab because the Templars had set up a wall in front of it. It was said that they had taken it as a shelter from which they had committed acts of aggression and assault. From the western sides of the *Qiblah* they had built a vast abode and a sublime church. Therefore, the sultan ordered that Mihrab should be revealed and unveiled, and all the buildings facing it should be demolished so that the people could gather to perform the Friday prayer. The pulpit was set up and the purified Mihrab was unveiled. The earth was covered with refined carpets instead of mats and rugs, lamps were hung and Qur'anic verses were recited. In addition, truthfulness was made manifest and falsehood was revoked. The Glorious Qur'an and the noble regulations thereof were established, worshipping Allah was observed, prayers were performed, invocations were answered, blessings became manifest, catastrophes were driven away, the Qur'anic verses were recited and banners were raised. Moreover, the Muezzins called for prayers and church bells disappeared. The priests disappeared, frowns and wretchedness were eradicated, the souls and hearts found great tranquility and relief, felicity prevailed and evil portents vanished.

The estranged faith returned to its abode. grants were donated by the generous, chapters from the Glorious Qur'an were recited repeatedly, the pious and the worshipers assembled, so Allah, the One and Only was worshiped, and worshipers declared Monotheism. The bowing and prostrating worshipers came one after the other. The devout and loving worshipers, the judges, witnesses, the struggling and contending, and the standing and sitting worshipers frequented the place. Pulpits resounded with Islamic sermons and those who had memorized the Glorious Qur'an were dictated (Qur'anic verses). Preachers made the worshipers cry in humbleness and the men of knowledge reminded one another of the jurisprudent opinions.

By Friday 4th of Sha`ban, the people appealed to the sultan to appoint a speaker, and the mosque was filled with praying worshipers as Islamic gatherings celebrated. People paid attention, their eyes shed tears compassionately, and places were crammed with attendants. The people said, "This is indeed an honorable day, an awesome favor, and a great occasion. It is the day on which invocations are answered, blessings are granted, tears are shed, and obstacles are removed. It is a day on which the negligent becomes fully aware, and the worshipers find a great lesson. Blessed be those who survived to witness that Day on which Islam was enlivened! How great was the group who were present at that time. They were really a pure community. How noble was the victory we attained at the hands of an-Nasir."

People spoke and guessed who was the suitable person to preach. Voices were raised, groups gathered, and throngs crammed within places. The men of knowledge made a din that resembled that of the pilgrims standing on Mount `Arafat. At midday the sultan appointed a preacher and revealed the cause of this choice; He was Judge Muhyi ad-Din Abu al-Ma`ali Muhammad ibn Zaki ad-Din `Ali.

I gave him a black cloak as an honor granted by the Caliph. He spoke and the people listened in humbleness. He spoke and they remained silent. He expounded and explained difficult matters with great eloquence. He made clear the merits of the Sacred Mosque and al-Aqsa Mosque. He talked about al-Aqsa Mosque since its establishment until the great victory. Then he invoked blessings on the Caliph and the sultan and concluded his sermon with Allah's Words, ﴿*Verily, Allah enjoins al `Adl (i.e. justice and worshipping none but Allah Alone) and al-Ihsan (i.e. to be patient in performing your duties to Allah, totally for Allah's sake and in accordance with the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger in a perfect way).*﴾[1]

Afterwards, he performed the Prayer in the Mihrab. Thus, mercy descended and bliss was perfected. After performing the Prayer, the people dispersed. A seat, facing the *Qiblah*, had been given to Zayn ad-Din Abu al-Hasan `Ali. He spoke about the worshipers who had feared Allah and hoped for His Mercy, the blessed and the wretched and those who had perished and others who had been saved.

The sultan performed Prayer in the Dome of the Rock and the rows of praying Muslims filled the spacious area. The Muslims invoked Allah to let their victory prevail forever. The faces turning toward the *Qiblah* became more submissive and hands of the worshipers were raised in supplication.

1. An-Nahl: 90.

Chapter LXXXI

The Sermon of Judge Muhyi ad-Din

[393] Al-'Imad said:

Judge Muhyi ad-Din ibn Zaki ad Din gave four sermons on four consecutive Fridays. Here is one of these sermons:

﴾So the root of the people who did wrong was cut off. And all praise and thanks are due to Allah, the Lord of mankind, jinn, and all that exists.﴿[1] *﴾The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. The Only Owner of the Day of Recompense.﴿*[2] *﴾And say: All praise and thanks be to Allah, Who has not begotten a son.﴿*[3] *﴾All praise and thanks be to Allah, Who has sent down to His slave the Book﴿*[4] *﴾Say: All Praise and thanks be to Allah and peace be on His slaves whom He has chosen.﴿*[5] *﴾All praise and thanks be to Allah, to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth.﴿*[6] *﴾All praise and thanks be to Allah, the Only Originator of the heavens and the earth.﴿*[7]

All praise and thanks belong to Allah, Who has honored Islam with His victory and humiliated polytheism with His punishment, as He disposes all affairs according to His Command, perpetuating His blessings if we thank and praise Him, and humiliating the disbelievers

1. Al-An'am: 45.
2. Al-Fatihah: 1-4.
3. Al-Isra': 111
4. Al-Kahf 1.
5. An-Naml. 59.
6. Saba': 1.
7. Fatir: 1.

with His Divine plan. He, the Almighty, predestined days to alter according to His Justice, ordained a blissful destiny for the pious by virtue of His favors, granting His worshipers His shelter, and revealed His True Religion and made it prevail over all others. He masters everything according to His will; so no one can ever contend with Him.

I praise Him for His great victory and conquest, His support to His worshipers, the triumph He granted to His men as He rendered Jerusalem purified and free of all the impurities and evils of polytheism. I profess that none has the right to be worshiped but Allah, the One, the Self-Sufficient Master Whom all creatures need; He begets not, nor was He begotten, and there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him.

It is a testimony of faith professed by one whose heart is purified by Monotheism, striving to please his Lord. And I profess that Muhammad is Allah's Slave and Messenger, who eliminated heresy and warded off polytheism. He (peace be upon him) was taken on a night journey from *al-Masjid al-Haram* (in Mecca) to *al-Masjid al-Aqsa* (in Jerusalem), then he (peace be upon him) ascended to the seventh heaven until he reached *Sidrat al-Muntaha* (a lote-tree of the utmost boundary over the seventh heaven beyond which none can pass) as near to it is the Paradise of Abode. May the peace of Allah be upon him and his Caliph Abu Bakr, the trustworthy, who preceded everyone in embracing Islam; upon the Commander of the Faithful `Umar ibn al-Khattab who was the first one who liberated this House from the yoke of the Cross; upon the Commander of the Faithful `Uthman ibn `Affan, Dhu an-Nurayn (the husband of the two daughters of Allah's Messenger) and the compiler of the Noble Qur'an; and upon `Ali ibn Abi Talib, the man who made the polytheists quake and destroyed the idols. May Allah endow with His mercy the Prophet's household, Companions, and followers.

O people, rejoice at having Allah's Paradise; your greatest aim, and greatest rank by virtue of what Allah has facilitated at your hands, that is, retrieving this long-sought goal from that straying community, restoring it to its right place in Islam after having been, for approximately a century, profaned at the hands of the polytheists who deviated from the right path. You purified this mosque which Allah had ordered to be raised, as in it His Name is remembered (i.e. the call for prayer, and the performance of Prayers). Allah raised its pillars and foundations on Monotheism on which it had been established; and piety as it had been founded on piety from all directions. It is the abode of your father Ibrahim, and the place from which your Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) ascended to the heavens. It is the *Qiblah* towards which you used to turn in prayers at the dawn of Islam. It is the seat of all the prophets, the destination of pious people, the place of the descent of Revelation and the spot on which orders and prohibitions were revealed. Allah would not have granted you this honor if you had not been selected by Him for this unparalleled honor, so blessed is your army that accomplished great miracles. You followed in the footsteps of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) and his Companions who defended Islam and achieved many great victories over the enemies of Allah. May Allah reward you with the best reward on behalf of His Messenger, Muhammad (peace be upon him), and praise you for the efforts you exerted in combating the enemies, and may He accept your sacrifice.

You have to estimate these blessings fairly and praise Allah, the Almighty, as all praise and thanks are due to Him. This is the great conquest to which all the gates of heaven are opened, and for which the closest angels rejoiced and the Prophets and Messengers are content. Surely, it is Allah's Blessing and Will that your army should conquer the Sacred Sanctuary in Jerusalem, as your soldiers' swords

raised the banners of Faith after the passage of long years since Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) was sent. So it seems that the angels' happiness surpasses that of humankind.

It is true as it is the Sacred Sanctuary about which Allah said in the Qur'an, ﴿*Glorified be He (Allah) Who took His slave (Muhammad (peace be upon him) for a night journey from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa, the neighborhood whereof We have blessed.*﴾[1] Verily, it is the Sacred Sanctuary, which was honored by kings, praised by the Prophets and in which the four Sacred Books were recited.

So praise Allah Who gave you the power to persevere, preferred you over all mankind and aided you to accomplish what all peoples and communities before you had failed to attain. He predestined you to gather your word (that had been indecisive for a long time) for the sake of His True Religion and accomplish the great conquest without delay.

May you rejoice because Allah commended you among the angels above by virtue of this conquest, making you His soldiers after having been the soldiers of your own desires. The descending angels praised you as you granted this Sanctuary the righteousness of Monotheism, allowing sanctity and praising be propagated, and removing all the evils of polytheism including the doctrine of the Trinity

Now, the angels in heavens ask Allah that you be forgiven and they ask that you be blessed with blessed prayers; so you should retain and preserve this gift, and guard this blessing within you by fearing Allah with great piety. Whosoever adheres to this will be saved, and whosoever clings to its firm grip will be secured. Beware of following your worldly desires and retreating. Avoid your enemies' torture, as you have to avail yourselves of opportunities and remove all remaining agonies. You should contend for the sake of Allah and strive to sell

1. Al-Isra', 1.

yourselves to gain His satisfaction as He, the Almighty, made you the best of His worshipers. Beware of Satan lest he makes you slip into the abyss of sins or to oppress people. Beware of thinking that this victory has been attained by aid of your unsheathed swords, your steeds, or your contention in these relentless cities. No, by Allah, victory is granted solely by Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

O worshipers, beware of committing grave sins or atrocities after having been honored by this graceful conquest and favored with this clear victory lest you be like those who undo a rope that they had spun.

Jihad is really the best way of worshipping Allah, and it is the most dignified deed. Verily, if you stand up for the Cause of Allah, Allah will render you victorious; remember Allah and He will remember you; praise Allah and He will augment what you have and praise you. Persevere in treating diseases, plucking out the roots of the enemies, purifying the remaining parts of the earth, which incurred the Wrath of Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him), and uprooting all branches of heresy (and disbelief). Allah is the Greatest. Verily He granted us supreme help and a great conquest. Really, Allah defames and humiliates whosoever disbelieves.

You should know that this is an opportunity you should take advantage of, a prey you must gain, and a mission you should decidedly carry out with diligence. Allah enabled you to conquer this defeated enemy who had been equal to you or exceeding you (in number and might). How come you do not glorify the Almighty while everyone of them was faced with twenty soldiers from you, the Almighty said, ﴾*If there are twenty steadfast persons amongst you, they will overcome two hundred ..*﴿[1] May Allah help us all to follow His orders and avoid His prohibitions.

1 Al-Anfal: 65.

Allah, the Almighty, says, ﴿*If Allah helps you, none can overcome you; and if He forsakes you, who is there after Him that can help you?*﴾[1]

The second sermon was regular. Then, he invoked Allah for the sultan saying:

O Allah, let our sultan be always Your slave who is subject to Your sovereignty and let him always praise You for Your blessings upon us and let him always acknowledge Your Grace. May he be always Your sharp sword, the glittering meteor, the defender of Your Right, the protector of Your Sacred Sanctuary: the great master, king an-Nasir who gathered the word of faith and the subduer of the worshipers of the cross. He is the reformer of our worldly and religious affairs, the sultan of Islam and the Muslims, and the purifier of Jerusalem.

O my Lord! Let his kingdom prevail and Your angels attend to his banners and reward him with the best reward. O my Lord! Let Saladin have a long life and make his call propagate throughout the entire world. O my Lord! You ordained that Jerusalem be conquered by him after doubts had prevailed and after the believing worshipers had been tried, and after far and near parts of the earth had been conquered and controlled at his hands. O my Lord! Let the world be reformed by his aid; let the disbelievers be defamed; the immoral be thwarted; and his kingdom be expanded. O my Lord! Strengthen his kingdom through his hands and those of his successors until Doomsday and guard him and his offspring. O Allah, as You endowed him with this great victory and transient kingdom, endow him with the eternal kingdom that will never perish in the abode of the pious; as You answer his prayer in: ﴿*My Lord! Grant me power and ability that I may be grateful for Your favors which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I*

1. Al `Imran: 160.

may do righteous good deeds that will please You, and admit me by Your Mercy among Your righteous slaves. ﴾[1]

Chapter LXXXII

The Pulpit

[394] Al-'Imad said:

When we conquered Jerusalem, we were ordered to renovate the Mihrab by tiling it with marble and beautifying it. It became a ceremonial pulpit and on the first day we organized and performed an obligatory prayer. Afterwards, there was a need to have an exquisite pulpit. The sultan remembered the pulpit which king Nur ad-Din Zangi (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) had established for Jerusalem twenty years before conquering it. He sent a messenger to Aleppo asking for the superb pulpit.

[395] King Nur ad-Din Zangi had a feeling that Jerusalem would be conquered after his death. Thus, he commanded that a pulpit be constructed in Aleppo especially for Jerusalem. Accordingly, many carpenters, workers, and architects overexerted themselves for several years to finish it. Having constructed it, they kept it in the Mosque of Aleppo until the sultan ordered it to be transferred to Jerusalem.

[396] Nur ad-Din planned to launch prospective conquests against the Levantine and Egyptian cities. Thus, he set his mind (and heart) to this mission since he assumed the power. Although it had not been

1. An-Naml 19.

achieved at his hands, he was the main cause of this conquest as his followers and princes followed in his steps and adhered to his strategy.

[397] He probably read the writings of Abu al-Hakam ibn Barjan al-Andalusi in his interpretation (of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an). The latter correctly expected the year in which Jerusalem would be conquered. At that time, Nur ad-Din was eleven years old. Al-Andalusi mentioned in his interpretation of the chapter of ar-Rum that the Romans conquered Jerusalem in 487 A.H. (1094 A.C.) and he noted that it would remain under their control until about 583 A.H. (1187 A.C.).

Some jurisprudents said that he based this deduction on chronological order as his contemporary astrologers did.

Chapter LXXXIII

[398] Al-`Imad said:

The Franks set up a church on the site of the Dome of the Rock and distorted the Dome. They adorned the church with images and statues and set aside places for monks. They completed their pretensions of glorification and veneration, and allocated a foot of ground for a small gilded dome raised on marble pillars. They claimed that it was the place where Jesus Christ had walked. The sultan ordered his men to disclose it, to scrape off the marble that the Franks had put, and to restore it to its original form.

The Franks had cut several parts of the Rock and carried some of them to Constantinople and Sicily where were sold and exchanged for their equal weight in gold.

The sultan appointed an Imam in the Dome of the Rock and took great care of it. Moreover, he sent copies of the Glorious Qur'an to it and to al-Aqsa Mosque. Thus, many scholars and worshipers settled in Jerusalem. The nights were resplendent as the Muslims gathered. Candles were lit, and the people's humbleness and piety were noticeable. Many of the pious shed tears and men of knowledge trembled. Many Muslims stood for night prayer, reciting the Glorious Qur'an and trying hard to ward off Satan.

The Ayyubid kings vied with one another to win the people's heart. Taqiyy ad-Din `Umar granted everything necessary to make it prosperous. Once he brought huge amounts of rose water and large amounts of money allotted for alms-giving and charity to the Dome of the Rock He himself cleaned the courtyards with water then he cleansed them again with rose water and filled the place with incense.

King al-Afdal Nur ad-Din `Ali (Saladin's son) brought gleaming lights and spread out fine carpets therein.

The Mihrab of Dawud outside al-Aqsa Mosque was in an insurmountable fort within the city, in a lofty rank and it was the fort where the ruler lived. The sultan appointed an Imam, two muezzins, and a supervisor for it. It became a resort for the righteous and a shrine for all people. Then he issued orders for the maintenance of mosques and religious shrines.

This Mihrab was the abode of Dawud and Sulayman (peace be upon them). The sultan assembled the jurisprudents, the righteous men of knowledge, and the pious to seek their opinion concerning constructing a school for the Shafi`i *Madh-hab* and a hospice for pious Sufis.

Chapter LXXXIV

Some Events

[399] Al-'Imad said:

The Franks left their houses and sold the furniture and food they had hoarded. They were given respite until they could manage to sell their belongings at the lowest price.

It seemed as if their departure would be for free, especially as it was impossible for them to transfer their wealth due to its heavy weight. They were similar to those about whom Allah, the Almighty, said, ﴾*How many of gardens and springs that they left behind, and green crops and goodly places. And comforts of life wherein they used to take delight! Thus it was! And We made other people inherit them.*﴿[1]

Therefore, they sold some things at a low price and kept some others that they could not give up. Trunks, wood, marble, carpets and many other things they used to keep in their houses and churches were left behind for the Muslims.

After the respite, those who failed to pay the fixed taxes were captured according to the concluded agreement. So our deputies took charge of them after we left Jerusalem. About fifteen thousand enslaved individuals were imprisoned. Then the sultan distributed them among the inhabitants of the cities. I myself took some prisoners: women and boys.

1. Ad-Dukhan: 25-28.

The Christians living in Jerusalem paid the fixed taxes and the head taxes (paid by non-Muslims) so as to live there in safety. We also destroyed the vestiges of the Frankish princes' cemetery that had been made next to the Rock.

[400] He added:

The sultan issued his orders to close the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and prevented the Christians from visiting it. Some people advised him to destroy its buildings and remove its vestiges, while some others said that it was useless to destroy and demolish it, as their place of worship was the place of the Cross. Thus, Christians from all over the world will never stop visiting the tomb even if it is demolished. Moreover, when the Commander of the Faithful, `Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) conquered Jerusalem at the dawn of Islam, he did not order that it be demolished.

[401] He continued:

The sultan fought until he captured all the forts in its vicinity. Then he distributed all the spoils and offered grants to those who deserved it. Many people blamed him for wasting huge amounts of money and considered his actions excessive. But he said, "How can I refrain from giving the people their rights? I fear Allah (and seek to avoid His Wrath) by spending such amounts of money. If they accept it then they have kindly gifted me. It is as if they are clearing me of a deposit I preserve for them." The people told him, "Why do you not save this money for the future?" He answered, "I have great hope that Allah, the Great Provider, will fulfill our wishes in the future!"

He gathered the released Muslim prisoners, gave them what they needed, and comforted them. Then everyone of them went to his homeland pleased.

[402] He added:

One day I heard king al-`Adil (Saladin's brother) speak about the sultan's generosity. "One day I was responsible of the spoils of Jerusalem. So I sent seventy thousand dinars to the sultan. In the following morning, the treasurer came to me and said, 'The sultan wants another amount of money for donations as nothing remains of what you sent us yesterday!' So I gave him another thirty thousand dinars on the spot."

Events of 584 A.H. (1188 A.C.)

Chapter LXXXV

Conquering Al-Ladhiqiyyah

[403] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

It is an exquisite city with a well-known harbor and two adjacent forts on a hill overlooking the country. On Thursday 14th Jumada al-Ula, the sultan arrived there and the soldiers took their positions. The fighting was ferocious. The Muslims crept up and contended with their enemies; voices were raised, and the din flared until the end of the day. He captured the city except for two forts, and the people gained a lot of spoils as it was a city of tradesmen.

The following morning, on Friday, Saladin entered a battle, trying hard to make openings in the northern part of the forts until the openings became twenty cubits long and four cubits wide. The battle continued until they even pelted one another with stones. When the

enemies of Allah discovered the humiliation and annihilation that had befallen them, they sought help and protection. They asked the judge of Jablah to settle an agreement on their behalf that would guarantee their protection. The sultan responded to the judge's request, as he never refrained from guaranteeing people the promise of safety.

After that, the judge of Jablah returned and told them that the sultan had accepted their request on condition that they leave the city taking with them their off-spring, wives, and wealth, and leave behind their crops, ammunition, armaments, and livestock. Thus, we settled there on Sunday, 17th Jumada al-Ula.

Al-`Imad said:

The sultan appointed his servant, Sunqur al-Khalati, as a governor in the city. With my very own eyes I saw that it is a vast and spacious city comprising grand buildings and orchards. However, the troops caused much damage to its buildings and vied with one another to seize the marble. They distorted the facades of the buildings and removed the most excellent parts of its beauty.

In the outskirts of al-Ladhiqiyyah, there was a great church studded with onyx and patched with various kinds of marble and multifarious images. The statues were different with equal angles and parallel edifices. The church was adorned for the followers of Satan and it was designed for the worshipers of idols and the Cross. When the people entered it they took the marble, distorted the buildings, and were about to completely destroy it.

I was sad when such buildings and edifices were destroyed, yet I rejoiced when they were restored to Muslims. Really, if the city had retained its jewels (after its status had been altered from falsehood to right guidance), it would have been dignified and exalted. The

Christians and Armenians living in the city agreed to pay the poll tax because of their patriotism.

When the sultan wanted to leave, he entered the city and reassured the inhabitants. Then he praised Allah Who enabled him to conquer it and Who had ordained him solely to hold sovereignty over it.

Chapter LXXXVI

Concluding a Truce with the Ruler of Antioch and the Return of the Sultan

[404] Al-`Imad said:

The sultan intended to go to Antioch, but he saw that the determination of the troops had abated and that their desire to contend had sorely weakened. They yearned for their homes and longed to be relieved of strife and contention.

The ruler of Antioch realized that if he had been attacked, he would have surely been defeated. So he sent his brother-in-law to the sultan asking him to conclude a truce in return for setting free all the Muslim prisoners he had. The sultan concluded a truce which would last eight months; from October until the end of May. The termination of the period of truce would be prior to the harvest, during which the soldiers would be able to have some rest before they resume their *Jihad*. When the truce was concluded, Shams ad-Dawlah ibn Munqidh hastened to relieve the prisoners and save them.

Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

The truce was concluded with the people of Antioch on condition that they would release all the Muslim prisoners they have. The term covered seven months. By the end of this period, they should hand the city over to the sultan if they did not get support.

Then the sultan intended to go to Damascus. He asked his son azh-Zhahir, the governor of Aleppo, to host him. He entered Aleppo on 11th of Sha`ban and stayed in the fortress for three days after which he headed for Damascus. His nephew, Taqiyy ad-Din, hosted him at the fortress of Hamah. He spent one night there and then he handed over to Taqiyy ad-Din Jablah and al-Ladhiqiyyah. He marched to Ba`albak and stayed in its tower for a day. Then he arrived at Damascus and stayed there until the beginning of Ramadan.

He never abandoned *Jihad* as long as he was able to perform it. There were fortresses, close to Hawran, which he feared to lose as they were near Safad and Kawkab, so he preferred to conquer the two places during Ramadan.

Chapter LXXXVII

Conquering Al-Karak and Its Fortresses

[405] Al-`Imad said:

Glad tidings came concerning the Muslims' success in controlling the fortress of al-Karak. Since their stay in Antioch, the Muslim troops continued to besiege the people of that city, i.e. al-Karak until their

supplies and provisions had run out. As they were desperate to get help and be rescued, they sent many messages to king al-`Adil seeking safety. Finally, they handed over the fortress.

Chapter LXXXVIII

Conquering Safad

[406] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

The sultan left Damascus at the beginning of Ramadan heading for Safad; an insurmountable fortress surrounded by valleys. He was not concerned about parting his family during that month when people used to unite with their families. When he arrived in Safad, his soldiers tightened their blockade and set up catapults on it. It rained heavily; nevertheless he was intent on achieving his goals.

One night, I was assisting him, as he was choosing five sites to set up the catapults, the sultan said, "This night we will not sleep until we have set up the catapults." He gave every group a catapult while his messengers were frequently informing him about the news until daybreak. So I narrated to him the well-known prophetic tradition in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Two eyes will not be touched by the Hell-fire: the eye (of a Muslim who) spent the night on guard for the cause of Allah, and the eyes (of a Muslim who) cried out of fear of Allah."

The fight continued while we were fasting until the city surrendered on the 14th of Shawwal.

Chapter LXXXIX

Conquering the Fortress of Kawkab

[407] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

Then he (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) marched on intending to conquer the fortress of Kawkab. He besieged the fortress and tightened the blockade. He also set up a position for himself that would be beyond the reach of their enemies. Then he set up a brick wall made with mud so that he could conceal himself behind it. The rain and storms did not stop and some of the Muslim soldiers were wounded and killed; however, the sultan managed to make openings in its walls. When the enemy felt that they were about to be defeated, they sought safety and security. The sultan responded to their request and controlled the fortress in the middle of Dhu al-Qa`dah.

[408] The following is a letter from the sultan to Sayf al-Islam (the brother of Saladin and the ruler of Yemen) and written by judge al-Fadil:

Now, the king and his attendants recognized that the Franks would never forget that we had conquered them, nor would they forbear the wounds we inflicted upon them. They constituted massive nations and armies. Allah's Hand was with the hands of the righteous and Allah endowed the believers with relief after hardship. The enemies were nothing but barking dogs and filthy devils. If they had not been pelted from every place, they would have demonstrated their strength and remained dominant and they would have rendered falsehood victorious more than we would have protected the truth.

The employers in Alexandria, the ruler of Constantinople, and the chiefs of the Moroccan ports sent letters warning the Muslims that their enemies were about to do something dangerous. Moreover, they would attempt to commit vile deeds because they were raged with wrath and kindled the fire of war, may Allah make them the firewood of the fire of that war. They unsheathed their swords to commit transgression, and most probably they would be the scabbards of those swords. As for us, by Allah, we exerted what was beyond our means; we bore all that was bearable and all that was not. Verily, we ask Allah to consolidate our hearts, as the hearts of some of us were almost going to digress and deviate from the straight path Now we seek refuge in our brother and call him to what we are called to do, hoping that Allah would render us victorious in our religion and our lives, grant us provisions and provide us with His Help. Hence, the king should not refrain from helping us, as the enemies would surely seize Yemen if they managed to control the Levant.

O Paradise! O Paradise! We cannot enter Paradise save by waging war against the people of Hell-fire!

O determination! O sincere intention! Sea waves are surging and do not mingle save with other waves of the sea. What is designated for a great man is unattainable except for him. No one can bear with honorable patience save those who are honorable and patient!

If Allah wills, He will grant us victory even if they are great in number and power. We never suspect that Allah, the Great and Almighty, granted us all these conquests and gathered all these nations around us to eventually defeat us. Moreover, we prefer that you would not spend your lifetime except in killing the atheists and fighting all the polytheists.

Events of 585 A.H. (1189 A.H.)

Chapter XC

Conquering Shaqif Arnun

[409] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

Shaqif Arnun is a well-fortified fortress near Baniyas. The sultan left Damascus after performing the Friday Prayer on the 3rd of Rabi` al-Awwal and marched until he reached Marj Fulus. The following day, he arrived at Marj Barghuth and stayed there until all the soldiers arrived on 11th Rabi` al-Awwal, after which he headed toward Baniyas and thereafter to Marj `Uyun, where he decided to set up camp as he was close to Shaqif Arnun. We spent days watching and observing the fortress of the enemy.

The amount of Muslim soldiers increased everyday and their supplies and ammunition augmented. The ruler of Shaqif realized that his situation was not secure and knew that he had to make reconciliation in order to guarantee his safety. Thus, he himself went to the tent of the sultan who allowed him to enter and treated him honorably. The ruler of Shaqif was a wise and great Frank, versed in the Arabic language and knowledgeable about history.

Moreover, I was informed that there was a Muslim man who read books to him and explained their meaning. He dined with the sultan and they were left alone. He told the sultan that he would surrender without any resistance, yet he stipulated that he should be given a

position and be allowed to dwell in Damascus with his family because he could no longer be reconciled with the Franks. He also wanted to be given a feudal fief in that place and be furnished with everything he and his family would need. Besides, he should be allowed to remain in his position for three months from that date so that he would be in a position to save his family and people from Tyre and to harvest the yield of that year.

All his requests were granted. He visited the sultan many times and used to debate with us concerning his religion. The man was eloquent, ethical, and decent.

After all that, the sultan received news that the ruler of Shaqif had behaved in this way so as to buy some time until he had sufficient power to face the Muslims. There was much evidence that he had collected provisions and fortified the gates. Therefore, the sultan decided to come nearer to the fortress to prevent any help or provisions from reaching him, and did not tell the ruler about this. During that time, the ruler asked the sultan to extend the period of three months to one year. The sultan did not give him a decisive answer and told him that he would discuss the matter with his advisors.

Al-`Imad said:

When the sultan was absolutely sure of his bad intentions, he ordered his men to draw closer to the fortress. Only two days remained of the truce and the sultan asked him to prepare to hand over the city. He humbly agreed and sent his deputies to do so, however, they rebelled against him and refused to fulfill his command. Moreover, they advised him to stay in his place and to not return to the fortress.

So he was moved to the fortress of Baniyas and then transferred to Damascus where he was imprisoned. Afterwards, the sultan sent some princes to besiege the fortress throughout the summer and winter until it was finally handed over to him after one year. Then, its ruler was set free and was granted amnesty.

Chapter XCI

The Arrival of the Franks at Acre

[410] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

We were informed that the Franks of Tyre and the troops accompanying the king were heading toward Acre. Some of them camped at Iskenderun and skirmishes took place between them and the Muslim soldiers, who killed a few of them. When the sultan was informed about that, he did not go to them as he thought this was a trick to let him leave Shaqif. Therefore, he waited until Sunday 12th Rajab, after which news came that the Franks had left and camped at `Ayn Bassah and some of them had arrived at az-Zayb (a village near Acre). Thus, the sultan sent a message to the Muslim rulers in the outskirts asking them to join him. On Monday 13th of Rajab, he headed toward Acre on the road of Tiberias which was the only one wide enough to accommodate the huge amount of his soldiers. Then he sent a group on the road of Tibnin to observe the enemy and continued to march by night until he reached a place called al-Manyah on Tuesday morning. At the same time, we were informed that the Franks had reached Acre.

The sultan continued until he joined the rest of his troops who had been sent on the road of Tibnin in Marj Safuriyyah. Then he entered Acre by surprise and many Muslim troops also arrived there and besieged the enemies in their tents to the extent that anyone who left his tent was either wounded or killed. The enemies were at a part of Acre and the tent of their king was on the hill of al-Mussallabin which was close to the city gate. The number of cavalry amounted to one thousand with thirty thousand foot soldiers. Some people guessed that their numbers exceeded that and their provisions and reinforcements poured in continually.

The Muslims wanted to attack the enemy, but the sultan prevented them from doing so at that time. Muslim troops from every place arrived successively headed by many Muslim princes such as Taqiyy ad-Din who came from Hamah and Muzhaffar ad-Din ibn Zayn ad-Din.

The Franks turned to Acre and by the end of Rajab, blocked the way for anyone coming either in or out. This was so distressing for the sultan who became angry and decided to open the way to Acre, so he headed toward them at the beginning of Sha`ban, besieged them, and finally attacked them after performing the Friday Prayer. The enemy was spread out over the hills. The fight continued until nightfall separated the two armies. On Saturday morning 2nd of Sha`ban, they resumed fighting.

The sultan sent soldiers to the coast to attack the Franks who were camping north of Acre. The Franks were defeated and many of them were killed. That day, the sultan entered Acre and climbed the wall to look at the enemy. People stopped fighting after the *Zhuhr* Prayer and did not resume it. On Sunday morning some Muslim princes decided to delay the fight until all the foot soldiers had entered Acre after which it was planned that they would attack them from every direction.

[411] The sultan supervised all this himself and displayed keenness, wisdom, and determination and his physicians informed me that he hardly ate anything from Friday until Sunday because of his excessive concern.

The Muslims continued to open the way to Acre, and fighting continued day and night until 11th Sha`ban. The sultan decided to expand the scope of this war; thus, he sent many troops to the hill of al-`Iyadiyyah which was just above Acre and the enemies' tents.

[412] Fighting continued for a long time. People were killed, wounded, or captured everyday and their treasures were plundered. Furthermore, two Muslim boys would struggle with two Frankish boys, so that a Muslim boy would jump on a Frankish boy and take him captive, after which the Franks purchased him for two dinars.

Chapter XCII

The Great Incursion That Began Badly but Then Improved

[413] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

On Wednesday 21st of Sha`ban, the Frankish troops made an unprecedented move; all their cavalry, foot soldiers, and warriors lined up outside their tents forming the central, right, and left flanks. In the central flank was the king with the New Testament in his hands, covered with a black cloth and four persons held each corner. They moved in front of the king, then the right flank extended to face the

left flank of the Muslims. The left flank of the enemies extended to face our right flank and then they seized the hill summit. The border of their right flank reached the river and their left flank extended till it reached the sea.

The sultan urged his people to fight against the enemies for the sake of their religion. Therefore, many Muslims mounted their horses selling their souls for the price of Paradise. Then, the sultan ordered the great numbers of the central, right, and left flank to prepare for battle.

[414] The sultan reviewed his troops urging them to fight to give the superiority to Allah's Religion. The left flank of the enemy marched towards the right flank of the Muslims: Taqiyy ad-Din resisted them and many skirmishes took place between the two parties. Then, Taqiyy ad-Din attempted to delude them and gradually seized them. He withdrew somewhat to tempt them to chase him and separate from the rest of their army, and thus he could beat them. When the sultan discovered that Taqiyy ad-Din had withdrawn, he thought that he needed support; hence, he supplied him with many soldiers. As a result, the left flank of the enemies retreated and gathered on a hill that looked down upon the sea.

When the Frankish soldiers at the central flank found that the central flank of the Muslims had weakened as many of its troops went to support another flank, they attacked the right part of the central flank and managed to defeat them. The left part of the central flank remained safe, as the Franks did not attack them.

[415] The sultan continued to review his troops urging them to fight in Allah's Cause. There were only five individuals with him while he reviewed the troops

[416] Judge Ibn Shaddad continued:

Many Muslims were killed and about a hundred and fifty soldiers and boys were lost. Among those who were killed was Zhahir ad-Din, the brother of `Isa, the Jurist. I saw sheikh `Isa laughing while people offered him their condolences. He said to the consolers, "This is the day of felicity, not the day of condolence!"

Seven thousand of the defeated enemies were killed; I saw them carried to the coast of the river and thrown in.

At the end of this incursion, the sultan ordered the army to retreat to al-Kharrubah for fear that the soldiers would be inflicted with disease. They were close to the place that the incursion had taken place yet it was farther than the place he had been staying in.

[417] Judge Ibn Shaddad added:

He summoned the princes and counselors and ordered them to listen attentively to him. He said, "In the Name of Allah, all praises and thanks are due to Allah and peace and prayers be upon His Messenger (peace be upon him). You should know that this is Allah's enemy and ours, and this enemy has trodden on the land of Islam. Shimmers of our victory loomed and only a small number of the franks remains, so we should be keen to uproot them completely. Allah, the Great and Almighty obliged us to do this, and you know for sure that this is our only army and we expect no help save that of my brother, king al-`Adil, who is about to arrive. If our enemies survive for a long time here, they will be supported and helped by many others; I am convinced that we should fight them. So I want each of you to tell me his stance on this matter!"

They suggested that they stay for a while at al-Kharrubah in order to get some recreation and rest from fighting. They should not,

according to their opinion, be committed to unbearable conditions because this might lead to negative consequences. The troops had been fighting, bearing arms, and riding horses for fifty days. Furthermore, they assured the sultan that if they stayed for a while, king al-`Adil would arrive and support them in this great battle against the enemies. The sultan accepted their opinion and tried to rejuvenate himself and mobilize his troops.

When the sultan was informed that the enemies were heading for Acre, he summoned his counselors in Marj `Uyun and consulted them. He told them, "I find benefit only in fighting them and preventing them from entering the city; because if they manage to do so, they will dig a trench and make it difficult for us to reach the city. Furthermore, they may cause much harm to the city and its people."

Chapter XCIII

The Incidents of the Same Year in Acre and Others

[418] Al-`Imad said:

On Monday 3rd of Ramadan, our troops in Acre captured a boat belonging to the Franks. It contained thirty men, only one woman, and a package of silk. They gained valuable spoils. Before that, our troops had been frustrated and depressed. However, when they captured that boat, their enthusiasm increased and they urged each other to fight the enemies.

[419] Judge al-Fadil described the state of the Muslims in a letter to some Muslim lands:

We hope that Allah increases the enthusiasm of the believers in order to fight in His Cause! Where is the enthusiasm of the Muslims?

We wonder when we find the polytheists co-operating with each other whereas the Muslims' willpower is at a standstill. Look at the Franks! How great their supplies are! They gathered their forces, sought after their goals, found help and succor, and spent huge amounts of money. All the kings in their countries and islands, the aristocrats and the great men among them, sent help and assistance to each other, vying in keenness and determination. To safeguard their religion, they sacrificed their souls and concentrated every effort onto one aim; to protect their temple and sanctify their faith. However, the Muslims were very different; they became feeble, they failed and neglected things and easily became sluggish and confused. Thus, there is no more time to give up to carelessness and weakness; we must find a way to enthuse our people. We hope that the Almighty grants us victory and supports us to annihilate the polytheists and save the believers, whose goal is peace!"

Al-`Imad said

The sultan sent a message to his brother al-`Adil in Egypt asking for his help. In response, al-`Adil came to their aid in the middle of Shawwal, along with Husam ad-Din Lu'lu' who came to support the sultan with fifty warships belonging to the Egyptian fleet in the middle of Dhu al-Qa`dah. These ships attacked the Frankish navy by surprise and gained many spoils.

The sultan conveyed a group of princes to the city by ship, along with their soldiers, ammunition, and provisions. The Muslims planned

to attack some of the Franks by night and they managed to kill and capture many.

[420] A message was sent to the caliphate in Baghdad describing the state of the Franks. It reads as follows:

For three months, the Franks have fought severely against the Muslims and done their best to extinguish the light of Islam. More than twenty thousand of them were killed throughout many fearful incursions, yet this did not decrease their numbers nor affect their enthusiasm. The enemies are not to be overcome by plots nor annihilated by perdition. The enemies encompassed all those beyond the sea as well as those in the houses of the disbelievers. All their towns and cities were mobilized; they called everybody to fight against the Muslims and took their cross during the battle of Hittin. Their priests declared that their brothers in Jerusalem had been annihilated by the Muslims; and they further stated that whoever left his house to fight against Islam, would have his sins forgiven and all his faults pardoned. And whoever was unable to travel, should take part in this endeavor through his wealth. Thus, huge numbers of them came to fight against the Muslims.

[421] Al-`Imad said:

A ship arrived carrying three hundred Frankish women from every isle. They came to devote themselves to the wretched, allure our people, and support theirs.

[422] He added:

Some of our foolish soldiers escaped, as they were tempted and sought pleasure. However, some of them regretted their mistake and returned to fight against the enemies of Allah.

[423] He went on saying:

Moreover, a noblewoman came by sea, with five hundred warriors along with their steeds and followers. She gave them all the provisions they needed, and they abided by all her commands. Among the Franks, there were some women were experienced equestrians wearing the same clothing as men. Such women considered their participation in fighting as an act of worship.

On the day of combat, some of those women wore the same clothes as men and took part in the battle. When they were identified, they were captured and sold in markets. Meanwhile, old women continued to urge people to fight for the sake of their (distorted) religion.

[424] He continued:

At the end of that year, the sultan sent delegates to cities and territories to call upon people to fight and help. They distributed leaflets urging people to fight in Allah's Cause. He sent a message to Sayf al-Islam in Yemen and Muzhaffar ad-Din Qazl Arsalan in Hamadhan asking them for help and support.

Chapter XCIV

The News About the German King

[425] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

At the beginning of Ramadan, a letter came from Saladin's brother, azh-Zhahir, in Aleppo to state that the king of Germany had departed from Constantinople with a huge army having one aim: to

attack the Islamic territories. It was said that his troops exceeded two hundred thousand.

[426] He added:

These news were extremely hard for the sultan. He decided to urge people to fight and to send a message to the Caliph in Baghdad. He sent me to the ruler of Sinjar, the ruler of Mosul, and the governor of Irbil asking them for help and support. Then, he ordered me to go to Baghdad. I obeyed and went there on 11th of Ramadan. They responded with pleasure and offered to sacrifice their lives for Allah's Sake. The ruler of Mosul, `Ala' ad-Din, sent his son with almost all his army and promised to do their best. On 5th Rabi` al-Awwal 586 A.H. (1190 A.C.), I returned to the sultan and told him the results of my mission, upon which he rejoiced.

Al-`Imad said:

News arrived that the king of Germany had arrived at Constantinople with about three hundred thousand fighters in addition to many kings and princes targeting the Islamic cities. On his way, he passed by the cities of Rome and Armenia. The Roman king used to send us information about this massive army and in one of his letters he said, "I intended to prevent them from crossing the gulf; however when they came, we could not stop them. They managed to cross the gulf with huge amounts of reinforcements, yet their provisions and supplies were few."

When they reached the borders of the Islamic territories, they suffered because of the heavy cold and ice. They suffered much because they did not know the route well and their provisions were few. After some months, they lost half their soldiers and were greatly weakened. However, they still had enough ammunition.

Events of 586 A.H. (1190 A.C.)

Chapter XCV

The Arrival of the Kings and the Burning of Towers

[427] Al-`Imad said:

At the end of winter, the Muslim troops came from every place. Among them were king Asad ad Din Shirkuh, the ruler of Hims and ar-Rahbah, Sabiq ad-Din `Uthman, the ruler of Shayzar, and `Izz ad-Din Ibrahim ibn al-Muqaddim. Thus, the sultan left his palace with the intention to fight the enemy. He arrived at Kaysan Mound on Wednesday 18th Rabi` al-Awwal and mobilized his soldiers; Taqiyy ad-Din was in the rear of the right flank, al-`Adil was in the rear of the left flank, al-Afdal was in the right side of the central flank and his brother al-Muzhaffar was in the left side.

Then, azh-Zhahir arrived with the troops of Aleppo in addition to `Imad ad-Din Mahmud ibn Buhram, the ruler of Dara, with many other kings and fighters. The messenger of the caliph, ash-Sharif Fakhr ad-Din, arrived on Monday 16th Rabi` al-Awwal. He brought two amounts of volatile oil, two amounts of spears, twenty thousand dinars, and five experts in oil who were experienced in manufacturing a product that could set things alight. The messenger of the caliph stayed there for a long time before he returned.

Ibn Shaddad said:

On that day, the sultan was informed that the Franks had besieged the territory, thus, he encountered them so as to keep them too busy fighting to control the territory. He fought ferociously until the night fell. He feared that the enemy would attack the territory, so he moved on to al- Hijl Hill on 15th Rabi` al-Awwal because it was so close.

In the morning of that day, there was information about the enemy who had inundated part of the trenches and was determined to tighten its blockade around the territory. Therefore, the sultan repeatedly sent messages to the troops urging them to come hurriedly to his support. In the early morning of Friday, 17th Rabi` al-Awwal, his son azh-Zhahir arrived and by the end of that day, Muzhaffar ad-Din also arrived.

[428] He added:

The enemy had set up three towers of wood and iron and had insulated them with leather tempered with vinegar so that the fire could not burn them. Those towers were as high as mountains, and thus could easily be seen from anywhere. They were put on wheels. Each one could contain five hundred fighters and its surface was so broad that catapults could be fired from them. This made the Muslim troops afraid. The towers were set up and they were ready to be dragged to a place close to the wall.

The sultan wanted to set them ablaze and destroy them. He considered the matter over and over, then he discussed it with the experts in oil and asked about their ability to produce something that could set them afire and he promised to give them huge amounts of money and generous donations; but they failed. A coppersmith from Damascus mentioned that he could manufacture something that could

burn them. He was given all the material he needed and he managed to cast them at the towers which were consequently set ablaze and the Muslims shouted, "Allah is the Greatest."

The sultan and his troops marched on to the enemies and waited until they came out of the towers to fight them. However, the enemies did not emerge from their tents, as they knew they had been defeated.

[429] The Muslim troops continued to arrive in the scene. On 22nd of Rabi` ath-Thani, `Imad ad-Din Zangi ibn Mawdud ibn Zangi, the ruler of Sinjar and Nur ad-Din's nephew and his son-in-law also arrived. The sultan met him with all veneration and respect and his tent was pitched beside the river, near the left flank of the army.

[430] On 7th of Jumada al-Ula, Mu`izz ad-Din Sinjar Shah ibn Sayf ad-Din Ghazi ibn Mawdud ibn Zangi, the ruler of aj-Jazirah, arrived. The sultan received him and lodged him beside his uncle `Imad ad-Din. Moreover, on 9th of Jumada al-Ula, `Ala' ad-Din Khurram Shah ibn `Izz ad-Din Mas`ud ibn Mawdud ibn Zangi, the ruler of Mosul, arrived as a deputy of his father. The sultan rejoiced at his arrival and received him and his family from afar, admired his ethics, lodged him in his own tent, inundated him with honors, presented exquisite gifts to him, and ordered that his tent should be pitched beside the tents of his two sons al-Afdal and azh-Zhahir. At the end of the month, the ruler of Irbil, Zayn ad-Din Yusuf ibn Zayn ad-Din `Ali arrived and the sultan sent him to his brother Muzhaffar ad-Din at the left flank.

[431] Al-`Imad mentioned the same about the arrival of these kings and princess and about the burning of the three towers of the enemy.

Chapter XCVI
The Condition of the King of Germany

[432] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

News arrived about the arrival of the king of Germany with his troops. On their way, they were overloaded with armaments and supplies so they piled up everything and set them ablaze. Then, they arrived at Tarasus and pitched their tents by a river they wanted to cross. Their cursed king yearned to swim in it and the water was very cold. So he became sick and his condition worsened. When he realized that his physical condition was serious, he dictated his will to his son who was with him, and then he died.

When he died, they unanimously agreed that he would be boiled in vinegar. Then his bones were to be put in a sack and taken to Jerusalem to be buried there. His son succeeded him and he was supported by some of his companions. Yet his eldest son acted as his representative in his territory.

When Lavon, the king of the Christian Armenians, discovered the chaos in the territory, and knew that famine and drought prevailed because of the death of their kings, he decided not to get involved in what was going on. He considered it a serious situation.

[433] The head of the Armenians and the lord of the castle of the Romans described them in a message to the sultan, "In general, they were great in number and of mixed races, having strange behavior. They had a great aim and were serious in achieving their target in a

shrewd way. Any one who committed a crime would be slaughtered like a sheep. We were informed that a boy committed a venial error against his master and the priests assembled and decided that the boy should be slaughtered. Even the king approved this death sentence and did not consider the mediation of the people."

[434] Because of their grief over Jerusalem, they prohibited themselves from having any kind of pleasure. If they came to know that anyone found pleasure in anything, they would punish him. An authenticated source mentioned that they used to forsake wearing clothes for a long period of time and prohibited themselves from owning garments.

Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

I attended the assembly in which someone informed the sultan about them saying, "They are numerous but feeble, equipped with few steeds and supplies. They depend mainly on donkeys and frail horses."

I stood on a bridge they were crossing, so I could give a true account of them. A large number of them crossed over, yet I did not find any arrow or spear with them. I asked them about this and they answered, "We have stayed in a poor place for a few days, and our provisions and fuel has decreased, so we used our supplies as fuel. Many of us died and we slaughtered the steeds and ate them."

When the sultan was assured that the king of Germany was marching towards the Islamic territories, he summoned his princes and decision-makers to consult them. They agreed that some troops should proceed to the territories adjacent to the enemies, and that, in the main time, the sultan should continue to contend with the enemies in Acre.

Nasir ad-Din ibn Taqiyy ad-Din, the ruler of Manbij, was the first to march towards the enemies. Then, `Izz ad-Din ibn al-Muqaddim,

the ruler of Kafr Tab and Barin, Majd ad-Din, the ruler of Shayzar, and many others went to fight against the enemies. King azh-Zhahir marched on to Aleppo to make sure of their situation and protect the territories in his vicinity. King al-Muzhaffar moved on in his wake to protect the adjacent territories and confront the enemy.

When these soldiers moved on, the power of the right flank decreased as the majority of soldiers who left the ranks were from the right flank. The sultan ordered king al-`Adil to take the place of Taqiyy ad-Din at the end of the right flank.

A severe disease afflicted the soldiers and many others from both parties. Many of the Muslim troops fell ill; but it was not a plague. Many of the enemies suffered a lot and a large number of them died.

[435] Judge al-Fadil wrote to the divan of the caliph in Baghdad informing him about the state of the Franks who were about to enter Acre, and about the state of the Muslim troops. In his message, he highly eulogized Saladin and asked the caliph to support him and offer him any help he needed.

Chapter XCVII

Al-`Adil Attacking Acre on 20th Jumada Al-Akhirah

[436] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

The enemies of Allah knew that the Muslim troops were scattered throughout the outskirts of the city and that those on the right flank

could no longer gather. Thus, they unanimously agreed to make a sudden attack against the right flank. They headed toward the right flank where the camp of al-`Adil was located. When they were seen, their caller cried out and they rushed out of their tents like lions leaping out of their dens.

[437] He added:

I saw the sultan mounting his horse even before his soldiers. He was surrounded by his close followers and his caller cried out, "Fight for the sake of Allah! Fight for the sake of Islam!" Saladin was worried about the state of the Muslims; he looked like a woman who had lost her only child The Franks hurried towards the right flank and reached the camp of al-`Adil before the Muslim troops settled on their mounts. They attacked markets and tents. Al-`Adil rode his horse and urged those on his right flank to do the same, but he stopped and did not move in order to allow the enemies to be completely involved in their aggression. As expected, the enemy was busy plundering the camp, clothing, fruit, and food. When he was sure they were engrossed in their activities, he called upon those from his right flank to proceed. His call reached them all, even the troops in Mosul. Thus, they attacked the enemy fiercely and with the advantage of surprise. Then Allah granted them victory and the enemies were defeated and returned to their camps, but the Muslim troops continued to chase and kill them.

The caller of the sultan cried out, "O Muslim heroes! Here is the enemy of Allah, over whom He has granted you power, coming upon your camps driven by their greed." Thus, his close followers along with the troops of Mosul headed by `Ala' ad-Din ibn `Izz ad-Din and the troops of Egypt headed by Sunqur al-Halabi, immediately responded to his call. The troops came in succession and the war

flared up. After only one hour, we saw the enemies lying dead as if they were hollow trunks of date palms. The corpses extended from the Muslim's camp to the enemy's camp. The distance covered by their bodies was great; only a very few survived.

[438] He continued to say:

On the back of my horse, I reviewed those bodies and I wanted to count them but I could not because of their large numbers. I saw that two women had been killed; I was told that four of their women had been fighting and two of them were taken prisoners. Only a few men were taken prisoners. All this took place in the right flank and a part of the center. When the Muslim troops from the left flank heard the caller of the sultan, they fought hard and defeated the enemy. This battle lasted for a short time; only from noon to the afternoon. On that day, only ten unknown Muslims were killed.

When the Muslim troops in Acre saw the battle that took place between the Muslims and the enemy outside Acre from above the city's wall, they went to the enemy's camp and a fierce fight took place. The Muslims attacked the enemy's camps and took everything there.

There was no way that the precise number of the dead could be known. Some said they were eight thousand, while some others claimed they were seven thousand. Anyway, it was definitely not less than five thousand.

[439] Al-`Imad related the battle as previously mentioned and added:

The sultan then arrived and was pleased to see the great loss the Franks had incurred, and was exceedingly grateful to Allah Who had granted them victory. He saw the bodies of the enemies and the great distance they covered. Judge Baha' ad-Din ibn Shaddad and I rode our

horses to look at the mutilated bodies. Afterwards, the Franks corresponded with the sultan asking for reconciliation but they were trying to delude the Muslims. The sultan permitted them to go and look at the bodies.

Chapter XCVIII

[440] Al-`Imad added:

After this victory, we decided that we should attack them frequently until they perished. The sultan was busy reading the letters that had reached him about the success the Turks and others had attained over the German troops. The Franks received support and supplies via the sea; thus, their numbers and equipment exceeded what they had lost and it was as if they had not been defeated at all. Amalric[1] arrived and distributed money and provided ten thousand men with war equipment, and he decided to go out to fight the Muslim troops. The king set up many catapults around Acre, but the Muslims burnt them and seventy of their horsemen were killed and some of their famous ones were taken prisoners. Then, he set up another two catapults, but they were also burnt in the 1st of Sha`ban and it was said that the king had spent one thousand and five hundred dinars to make one of them.

Among those taken prisoners was a senior horseman who was killed as soon as he was captured. The Franks, unaware of what had happened to their man, asked that he be returned in exchange for a large amount of money. Thus, the Muslims gave them his body. Upon

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1 A Frankish king.

seeing that he was dead, the Franks started weeping and wailing. They fell on the ground and put dust upon their heads and were tremendously disappointed. The Muslims then saw them an easy prey and attacked them from all directions. In the meantime we continued receiving letters from Acre and vice versa.

[441] Al-`Imad continued:

A letter arrived from the king of Constantinople inviting the Muslims to perform the Friday Prayer in the mosque of Constantinople. In his letter, he expressed his loyalty and apologized for letting the German king cross over his land.

[442] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

There were many letters exchanged between the sultan and the king of Constantinople. A messenger from the king arrived at the sultan's place in Marj `Uyun in Rajab 585 A.H (1189 A.C.). In response to the sultan's message of establishing the rules of the sermons in the mosque of Constantinople. The sultan's messenger went there and delivered the sermon and was met with great respect and generosity. He was accompanied by an orator, some Muezzins, and many reciters of the Glorious Qur'an. The day they entered Constantinople was historic; it was witnessed by a large number of people. The orator ascended the pulpit and the Muslims gathered around him and he supplicated the Almighty for the Abbasids. Then, he returned with the messenger of the king to inform the sultan about the situation there.

[443] He added:

When the German king settled in Antioch, he seized power from its ruler and stole his property. He left it on the 15th of Rajab and

headed for Acre with his troop, through al-Ladhiqiyyah, until he reached Tripoli. There, he met the marquis, the ruler of Tyre, who was the strongest and most cunning of the Franks. He was the one who had originally stirred up the masses against the Muslims. It all started when he drew a huge illustration of Jerusalem, and drew the church where they perform their pilgrimage and the grave they claim that the Christ was in after being crucified. He highlighted the grave and drew a Muslim horseman standing on it with his horse urinating on the grave. He sent this picture to the countries beyond the sea and posted it in the markets and assemblies. The picture caused a kind of an uproar that even included the German king and his troops. That was why the marquis traveled to meet them; he was the one who had originally sent for them.

When meeting him, the marquis gave him a heart and informed him of the route. Then, he accompanied him along the coast for fear that the Muslims might attack them from all directions if they passed by Aleppo and Hamah. However, they were unable to avoid the Muslims' attacks and raids.

They continued walking and, at the same time, the Muslims continued attacking and killing them as well as taking some of them as captives until they reached Tripoli. He stayed there to give his troops a chance to rest and sent for those who were in Acre to inform them of his pending arrival. King Jeffrey, of Tripoli, was greatly saddened that he would lose his authority. At the end of Sha`ban, the German king sailed with his soldiers but a strong wind destroyed three of their ships and the rest headed for Tyre. He arrived in Acre with only a few of his men on the sixth of Ramadan.

[444] He added:

On the eighth of Sha`ban the news of their arrival to Tripoli reached the sultan who remained steadfast and continued to protect Acre. He continuously launched attacks against them. When I saw his courage and faith in Allah, I became optimistic and sure of attaining victory for Islam.

Chapter XCIX

Sending the Ships to Acre

[445] Ibn Shaddad said:

He (May the mercy of Allah be upon him) had prepared a ship in Beirut and filled it with four hundred sacks of wheat and other supplies like cheese, onions, and sheep. Meanwhile, the Franks were sailing their ships around Acre to guard it from the attack of any Muslim ship. The people in Acre were in dire need of food and provisions, so a group of the Muslims went on board this ship in Beirut wearing the Frankish uniform. They even shaved their beards and put pigs on board that could be seen from a long distance. Furthermore, they hung crosses and headed toward the city until they mixed with the enemy. The Franks met them; they were convinced they were from their people. The Franks asked the disguised Muslims, "We see you are heading for the city." They replied, "Have you not yet taken the city?" They answered, "Not yet." They told the Franks, "There is another ship behind us; so warn them against entering the city." Meanwhile, the Muslim ship increased its velocity and the wind

helped it to reach the city's port safely. Thus, the people felt relief as they were in dire need of these provisions. This took place during the last ten days of Rajab.

[446] He added:

In the beginning of Sha`ban, Baha' ad-Din Qaraqush, the ruler of the city, and Lu'lu', the leader of the fleet, sent a letter to the sultan informing him that the provisions in the city could barely satisfy the people's needs until the middle of the month. The sultan kept this a secret for fear that this information might reach the enemy and lower the Muslim's morale. Then, he sent a message to Egypt to prepare three ships filled with supplies, provisions and everything people might need throughout the whole winter. The three ships sailed from Egypt and the wind blew in their favor. They suffered a lot as they were attacked by the enemy; however they reached Acre safely in the middle of Sha`ban.

Chapter C

Al-`Imad said:

The German king then arrived and the sultan moved to the hill of Kaysan. The war continued into the night and it was a victorious day for the Muslims.

The judge said:

Many Franks were either killed or wounded. Others tried to run away but the Muslims continued chasing, fighting, and killing them. The German king, along with those who escaped, reached the camp

sure they were in extreme danger. Only two Muslims were killed but many were wounded.

[447] Part of a letter sent to Baghdad reads as follows, "Islam was afflicted by people, i.e. the Franks who were willing to die for their unjust cause. They left their homes behind in order to obey their priest and adhere to their Marquis. They were willing to sacrifice their souls for the sake of their holy grave. They asked for no money and did not give up hope despite the hardships they met.

[448] Even their women participated in the struggle. They left their homes well-armed and headed for the Levant. Among the Frankish women, there was a queen followed by five hundred knights whom she well-equipped. However, her ship was attacked near Alexandria and she and her men were captured. Another queen arrived with the German king along with some women. Some were killed and others were taken captive.

[449] The Roman Pope prohibited them from eating or drinking and said, 'Whoever will not go to Jerusalem to rescue it shall not be married or fed.' This was the reason behind their eagerness for that day. He also told them, 'I will arrive in spring to urge all people to go to war.' If this man gave a command, nobody would disobey; he used to provoke all the Christians to fight.

[450] Such was the case with the Christians who were fanatics despite their being on the wrong path. At the same time, some Muslims were complaining, rushing things, dispersing, and disputing. However, Allah promised to grant victory to Islam and to destroy polytheism."

[451] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

When the German king came to know what had happened to his companions, he decided to continue his fight against the city and to strive to break its resistance. He used outstanding and terrifying equipment to destroy the wall of the city.

The enemy set up huge catapults at the wall and its surrounding rocks, and threw them successively until they weakened it. The people were afraid so they took two arrows and burnt their heads until they became like a blazing fire and then they cast them at one of the catapults. The enemy worked hard to extinguish the fire but failed, and a strong wind blew causing the flame to reach the other catapult. Nobody was able to approach and extinguish the fire. It was a great day for the Muslims and a day full of grief for the disbelievers."

[452] He added:

Among the incidents that took place during this battle was the story of a Muslim swimmer called `Isa. He used to swim at night behind the enemy's back, tying money and letters around his waist. He used to dive and later emerge on the other side of the enemy's boats. One night, he tied to his waist three bags containing one thousand dinars and a letter to the troops. He swam out as usual but then something happened and he was lost. We heard nothing about him. We used to see a certain bird flying and this was a sign that the swimmer would soon arrive, but we did not see the bird as well and so we guessed that something had happened to him. A few days later, while people were standing on the beach, they saw a dead body thrown onto the shore, and after examining it, they found that he was `Isa and they found the money and the letter are still around his waist. There was no other person who fulfilled trusts like this man. This took place during the last ten days of Rajab.

Al-`Imad said:

`Isa was lost and we did not hear about him. People started thinking that he had stolen the money and run away. Almighty Allah wanted to prove his honesty; so he was found dead on the seashore in Acre.

Chapter CI

Burning the Ships, Besieging Adh-Dhuban Tower and Burning the Ram

[453] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

On the 22nd of Sha`ban, the enemy prepared several ships to besiege adh-Dhuban Tower. This tower had been built upon rocks in the middle of the sea at the gate of the port of Acre. It was a means of guarding the port and whenever a boat would pass by, it would be safe from enemy's attack. For this reason, the enemy wanted to take the tower, keep the port under its control and prevent any Muslim ship from entering. If they succeeded, no more provisions would be able to reach the people in the city. They put a tower on the mast of the ship that was filled with firewood and oil so that when the ship came close to the tower, they would burn the tower on the mast and then throw it upon adh-Dhuban Tower to kill all the fighters and then it would be easy to take control of it.

They put a lot of fuel on the ship to pour in the tower when setting it on fire. They also filled another ship with firewood and fuel in order to push it into the midst of the Muslim ships. Then they would set it

on fire and it would consequently burn all the Muslim ships along with the provisions they carried. In a third ship they made soldiers stand in a cellar in order to be away from the reach of arrows and weapons after they had burned what they intended to burn. They thought that by going to the cellar they would be safe. Therefore, they moved the ship towards the intended tower and were sure of their success, especially since the wind was blowing in their favor.

When setting the ship on fire, the wind, by Allah's Will, turned against them and their ship and tower were completely destroyed. All the efforts to extinguish the fire were in vain.

The soldiers in the cellar of the ship were greatly disturbed, confused and terrified; then it capsized. Unable to get out of the cellar, they all drowned. Thus, the Almighty supported His Religion and it was a historic day for the Muslims.

He added:

On the 3rd of Ramadan, the enemy marched to Acre in large numbers. The people of the city disregarded them and this doubled their greed. They dragged their equipment until they were about to reach the wall. However, many of them were trapped in the ditch and so the Muslims fired at them with fiery arrows. All the Muslims cried in one voice, opened the gates of the city, and rushed to the enemy from all directions. Some of the enemy fled and the rest, who could not flee, were killed. The Muslims then attacked their ram and threw fire and oil onto it, and it was badly burnt. Voices were then heard praising and glorifying Allah. The Muslims then hung iron hooks in the ram and dragged it to their city. It was made of huge machines and after water was thrown on it, it took days to cool down. We heard from the people of the city that the iron in it weighed one hundred quintals. Its head was sent to the sultan and I saw and examined it

myself. It was used to butt the wall so as to destroy whatever stood in its way.

When winter came, the eastern soldiers started to feel bored and discontented. `Imad ad-Din, the ruler of Sinjar, knew that the sultan would not like him to leave; so he remained where he was. Sinjar Shah, the ruler of aj-Jazirah, felt that he had stayed for a long time and had no desire to stay any longer. On *`Id al-Fitr* (the Lesser Bairam), he went to meet the sultan. He kissed his hand and bade him farewell without taking his permission. Thus, the sultan was furious because of his intention to leave without permission. On his way, he met Taqiyy ad-Din who persuaded him not to return home and took him back to the sultan who forgave him.

Judge Ibn Shaddad added:

Sinjar Shah sent many messengers and letters to the sultan asking for his permission to leave. However, the sultan rejected his demand and justified his stance saying that the enemy was asking repeatedly for reconciliation, and it would not be proper for the soldiers to disperse unless everything had become clear, i.e. to know whether they would make a peace treaty or continue in their fight. However, on *`Id al-Fitr*, he went to see the sultan. He kissed his hand and went out followed by his men. Knowing what he had done, the sultan wrote a letter to him saying, "It was you who insisted to have my support from the very beginning as you were worried about yourself, your family, and your country. Hence, I agreed and supported you. However, you plundered, violated, and killed many Muslims. I warned you and prohibited you repeatedly from doing so, but you did not pay attention to what I said. When the disbelievers tried to harm Islam, I called you and you came, along with your troops. You only stayed for a short while, before you started complaining. Then you walked away against

my will and at the most inopportune time. Thus, choose another friend because I am no longer your friend or supporter." Then, he handed the letter to a horseman who caught up with him near Tiberias.

Sinjar Shah read the letter but he continued on his way. Then, he met Taqiyy ad-Din and complained to him about the sultan having given him nothing and for his refusal to grant him permission to leave. Thus, Taqiyy ad-Din told him to go back and said, "You are young and you do not know how serious your actions are." Sinjar Shah said, "I cannot go back." He said, "You have to go back; there is no choice." Thus, Sinjar Shah returned and Taqiyy ad-Din asked the sultan to forgive him; and the sultan did

He added:

The Franks suffered from high prices and multiple hardships, so they fled to us; one group after the other. They asked for food for they were terribly hungry; when they were satisfied, they had no desire to return. Some of them embraced Islam, some others became good servants in our territories and others yearned for their people and returned to their homes.

Chapter CII

Correspondence Between Al-Fadil & the Sultan

[454] Meanwhile, judge al-Fadil was in Egypt preparing his troops and supplies to go to the sultan in Acre. The latter used to send messages to him seeking his advice, and he used to reply with kind and sincere words seeking nothing but the benefit of Islam.

In one of his messages to the sultan, judge al-Fadil wrote, "The humble judge reports that nobody can attain Allah's Reward except by obeying Him. Relief from misfortunes comes only through seeking refuge with Him and submitting to His Commands. However, sins and iniquities are prevalent everywhere, so we should seek refuge with Allah from all evil. Almighty Allah honored our leader by conquering Jerusalem; this may let him attain, Allah willing, His Pleasure and not His Wrath. The humble judge came to know from all the messengers from Jerusalem that it is in a terrible and pathetic state. I heard that reprehensible actions are widespread among its people, iniquities are pervasive in its estates, and corruption is prevalent in the whole country. I was also informed that it is not possible to repair al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock; this may make them likely to collapse, especially after being subjected to heavy rain and wind. Undoubtedly, our leader (may Allah grant him victory) is very busy with various matters and serious issues, but this is the nature of life. Our leader endured great affliction but proved to be patient and expressed neither hopelessness nor weariness. Nothing is greater than responding to the caller of *Jihad* when all others prefer to stay behind, and nothing is greater than enduring all the hardships of war for the sake of attaining Paradise.

We cannot deny the courage, firmness, and wisdom of our leader. He never shies from confronting the enemy with few soldiers because he knows that when one proceeds towards war, he is alone, but when he retreats, he is followed by all, and that cannot be resisted. Let our leader remember the battle of ar-Ramlah that was a test from Allah, and let him not hate having to undergo prolonged affliction with this enemy for it means greater reward from Allah. May Allah grant victory to those who support His Religion, and He shall certainly reward our leader for his great participation in *Jihad* through his effort, opinion, sons, followers, and armies."

[455] In another message, he wrote, "We have underestimated ourselves. Had we been sincere to Allah, He would have brought about the reward of our sincerity quickly. Had we obeyed Him, He would not have punished us by the hands of our enemy. Had we done our best in carrying out His Commands, He would have supported us with His Miracles. Therefore, one must blame only himself and know that defeat results from his inadequacy. One must resort to Allah and not wait for the troops to increase in number or for great amounts of wealth to arrive. Such matters only divert us from our real objective, i.e. obeying Allah. If we fail to remember our real aim, we will be prevented from attaining victory. So let us ask for our Lord's Forgiveness for had it not been for our sins, our prayers would have been answered a long time ago. May Allah kindly bestow His Grace upon our leader."

[456] Also, he wrote in another message, "Praise be to Allah, our troops are not suffering from weakness but from boredom and weariness. The power of the human being certainly has limits and the Divine Decree certainly has objectives. Thus, the former must serve the latter but within its limits. The humble judge is mentioning this to beg our leader not to hate those who are reluctant but we ask him to give credit to the courageous. Here Almighty Allah says, ﴿*So pass over (their faults), and ask (Allah's) Forgiveness for them, and consult them in the affairs.*﴾[1]

[457] O our leader, our Lord has examined His Servants' hearts and found yours the most appropriate. He has thus chosen you, and no one else, to support His Word and guard His *Qiblah*. Almighty Allah has chosen you only from amongst many kings and princes. Then He

1. Al 'Imran: 159.

filled your heart with fervor and theirs with apathy. He allowed them to indulge in worldly pleasures but He filled your heart with hatred for such pleasures. He tied their hands and swords and set yours free, ﴾*And if they had intended to march out, certainly, they would have made some preparation for it, but Allah was averse to their being sent forth, so He made them lag behind, and it was said: Sit you among those who sit.*﴿[1]

[458] Yes, what is even more important is that when all the polytheists around the world unanimously agreed to respond to the call for war and march to the fight, heedless to money or equipment, you - our leader (may Allah protect you) - were described in the following two lines:

You are not the victorious king over his rival
but the victorious Islam over the infidel.

[459] This was your attitude when you had no one else but yourself in the fight and when those who accompanied you were seeking nothing but worldly gain. It was as if you were urging them gradually to march and fight. It was as if you were inviting them to your own fight and recruiting them to perform some supererogatory work and yet it is an ordinance. It was as if you were urging them to achieve Paradise; as if it would be yours only.

When they were with you, they disagreed; some of them said, 'Why not keep away from the fight?' And others said, "Why not ask for reconciliation?" Others felt sorry for a fading past, longed for a foggy future, and thought about forsaking Acre to end the struggle with the polytheists forgetting the fact that they were the leaders of the troops and that if they decided to retreat, then everyone else would do

1. At-Tawbah. 46

the same. However, Allah inspired you to kill the polytheists, reprimand the weak, keep firm despite your standing upon live coals, and remain tranquil though you are left alone in the wilderness.

[460] Undoubtedly, the humble judge has taken much of your precious time, but he only meant to thank Allah, the Almighty. The humble judge just wanted to urge our leader to keep up high spirits, to remain kind and tolerant, and to continue to refrain from expressing any boredom or from insulting anyone. Adversities and calamities fade away but their memory remains and their reward lasts. So, just as you were not pompous for being blessed, do not be weary of being afflicted. Here I mention two lines of Hatim that our leader (may Allah protect him) knows well,

In poverty or in richness
No change we ever witness
As rich, no kin do we oppress
As poor, no wake of honor to miss

It is much more pleasing for the humble judge to hear that our leader (may Allah grant him victory) remains patient - as he has always been than to hear about the nearness of victory. I wish I were with them, for what could the days have done more with us? They would have either made us white-haired from witnessing the woes of war but we have already become white-haired from hearing the news of war, or suffer material loss that could have been compensated for anyway but we are already suffering from being far away from our leader. The days that pass can never return. We have become ill and our remedy is to be next to you."

[461] He wrote in another message, "Al-Muhhallab (a prominent leader) was asked, 'Are you pleased with a victory that comes easily without any effort?' He answered, 'I hate the manner of the weak.' It is a fact that Allah's Will must be fulfilled and no body can prevent His Decree. Thus, our leader should not resent his fate because it is inevitable; it would be better to be rewarded for your patience than to be punished for your resentment and hastiness. Be sure that whoever seeks refuge with Allah will definitely be relieved and supported, for He is the All-Omnipotent. Obviously, the lack of provisions in Acre is the reason behind your sleeplessness and your long walks at night thinking and contemplating. So, unburden your mind because the world has a Lord to take care of it, and excessive thinking will only add to your grief.

O predestined, to release
Trust in Him and be at ease

[462] O our leader, cheer up for those nights when you committed yourself only to *Jihad* when all other people had abandoned it, for those sleepless nights that you spent when all others were asleep, and for those horrifying hours that you witnessed in war. They are all blessings from Allah that will eventually lead you to cross the Path and enter Paradise safely. ﴾*On the Day when every person will be confronted with all the good he has done.*﴿[1] So praise Allah for such great blessings just as you praise Him for great conquests, and know that the reward of patience is much better than that of gratitude.

Out of his stamina, Caliph `Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) said, 'If patience and gratitude were two camels, I would not care which of them I should ride.' So it was their (i.e. the

1. Al `Imran: 30.

Companions) great determination that eventually led to their great victories. And be sure that Allah chooses only the best to defend the Divine right. Almighty Allah does not afflict any one except His Servants whom He knows will be patient. Life always goes on and one should forget the weariness and remember only the pleasure of the reward. The most important advice I can offer to our leader is that he must not weaken his body with grief, for he is the basis of the Muslim Nation.

A Persian proverb reads, 'If you are afflicted with something that you can handle, then do not sit on your hands. But if you are afflicted with something that you can do nothing about, then do not fall into panic.' Thus, trying to find a way out is better than sink in grief.

[463] Our sultan is fully confident of Allah's Might. Kings usually fight out of their greed, but our leader fights driven by his faith in Allah upon Whom alone he depends. He never gives up hope in Allah's Mercy and never questions the time of Allah's Victory. Thus, our leader should be patient, for he is the most qualified for this task, and should praise Allah during the hard times for this is the best kind of praise. Furthermore, you should accept Allah's Decree for this will bring about His Pleasure."

[464] When he was in the lands of the Franks, the sultan sent a letter to judge al-Fadil telling him about the signs of victory that he had witnessed. However, he wrote, "I am only afraid that Allah may allow them to defeat us because of our sins."

Thus, judge al-Fadil replied, "As for our leader's words about his apprehension of being defeated due to our sins, let him know that his being in that location fighting Allah's enemy has already wiped out his sins, that his sword which is stained with the enemy's blood has already

won him Allah's forgiveness, and those terrible hours he witnessed in war have already paved his way to Paradise. Blessed be those who followed our leader's example and fought with him in Allah's Cause."

Chapter CIII

[465] I heard that when the Franks tightened their besiege of Acre, the sultan (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) sent a message to the king of Morocco asking him to stop the provisions from reaching the enemy from the sea.

Al-`Imad said:

Judge al-Fadil wrote a letter to Ibn Munqidh asking him to travel to Morocco, as commanded by Saladin (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him). He was asking the king of Morocco, Ya`qub ibn Yusuf ibn `Abd al-Mu'min, for help when the Franks arrived at Acre after their defeat in Hittin and through the conquest of Jerusalem.

Chapter CIV

The Letter Sent to the King of Morocco and the Gift Presented to Him

[466] The title of the letter: A Message to the Pious and Virtuous king of Morocco (may Allah bring with him victory for Islam and raise him with piety).

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

This letter is from the humble servant of Allah, Yusuf ibn Ayyub. Praise be to Allah the Lord of the Worlds, the Ever-Compeller, the Ever-Subduer, the Ever-Endowing and the Ever-Sustaining, and may His Mercy and Blessings be upon Muhammad, the Last of His Messengers, upon whom He sent down His Book to guide creation to the True Path. And may His Blessings be upon his family and Companions and those who followed and supported him and who were thus granted victory. Almighty Allah says, ﴿*And those who came after them say, 'Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.'*﴾[1]

This graceful greeting comes to you from our sultan, the leader of Islam (may Allah grant him victory), and with this greeting I begin my letter expressing an old yearning and a strong wish. It is a great chance to congratulate you on conquering Jerusalem and on all your other conquests, knowing that your secret prayers were an essential part of attaining victory. However, our sultan is calling upon you to share in *Jihad*. If you decide to respond to this call, then know that Allah will answer your prayers very soon, especially after the enemy's defeat. It was a historical day for Muslims and a terrible one for the enemy. However, when the news of the enemy's defeat reached the polytheists in the West, they rushed with all their power to rescue their brothers; they did not wait for a royal command and all they heard was the voice of their priests urging them to fight. Moreover, some of their

1. Al-Hashr: 10.

kings marched to the fight including the king of the Germans who arrived with large numbers of warriors seeking nothing but supporting their false belief.

[467] So, those polytheists coming from the West provided their companions, besieged in the Levant, with food, equipment, weapons, troops, and money they needed. Because of this, the enemy had all the ammunition for war, and everyday an expedition reaches the enemy by sea with even more men and more supplies. As a result, the siege no longer represented a threat to the enemy for they always had what was needed. They amount to about a hundred thousand fighters; whenever some of them were killed, others came quickly to replace them, and so their number never decreases. We are still besieging the enemy, and though they dare not fight us, we cannot proceed towards them for they are well-fortified.

That the German king arrived with his large troops and headed for the Levant inspirited their soldiers and emboldened them to imagine that they could defeat us in our camps. Our soldiers in the North marched to stop him but he proceeded towards the left side along a winding road in order to avoid confronting our soldiers

His tyrannical father, the king of the Germans, drowned on his way to the Levant, so his son became the new leader. He may arrive at Acre from the seashore for fear of confronting our forces on land. Had our soldiers reached the German soldiers before their entering Antioch, they would have defeated him easily. However, Allah wanted him (their king) to walk to his own unfortunate destiny, and had it not been for their taking to the ditches as a cover, we could have triumphed over them.

Islam is now calling the sultan of Islam (referring to the king of Morocco) to come and rescue it. It is appealing to the leader of *Al-Mujahidun*[1] (referring to the same king), who is known for supporting Islam, to help it defeat Allah's enemy. In fact, it is expected that this precious country (Morocco) will supply the Muslim soldiers with much more provisions than those supplied by the Western polytheists to their soldiers. It was expected of this great country to send ships, one after the other; carrying provisions and weapons for our troops, the matter that would inspirit, enthuse and help them win victory over the polytheists.

However, receiving no such provisions from this beloved country, we decided to call on you again; calling for help and support. Thus, we send you this honest and noble prince; Abu al-Hazm `Abd ar-Rahman ibn Munqidh (may Allah protect him for Islam). He is a wise and eloquent man coming from a well-known family and seeing him proves his high qualities. He is our messenger whose mission is to make heard the sound of our call for help.

Finally, best regards to the noble and generous king, and may the peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you. Praise be to Allah and peace be upon Muhammad, the last of His Messengers and upon his family and Companions. It was written in Sha`ban, 586 A.H. (1190 A.C.)."

The gift was a copy of the noble Qur'an in a box perfumed with musk, three hundred *Mithqals*[2] of ambergris, ten necklaces with six hundred beads, one hundred and two bows with their strings, twenty saddles, twenty Indian spearheads, two ships, and seven hundred arrows.

1 Those who fight in the Cause of Allah.

2 A special kind of weight (equals 4 2/7 grams approx. used for weighing gold).

It was on the thirteenth of Ramadan 586 A.H. (1190 A.C.) when Ibn Munqidh left Alexandria in a large ship that could take up to a hundred and twenty passengers. He arrived in Tripoli, the first country on his way, on the 25^{th} of Shawwal, and stayed there until the 8^{th} of Dhu al-Qa`dah. He then headed for Morocco and there he met the vizier of the country, Abu Yahya ibn Abi Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Hafs. Then, on Thursday, the 7^{th} of Dhu al-Hijjah, he handed him the sultan's letter, and on the 20^{th} of Dhu al-Hijjah he was given permission to meet the king. Ibn Munqidh then left Morocco on the 10^{th} of Muharram 588 A.H. (1192 A.C.) and he arrived in Alexandria on the 28^{th} of Jumada al-Akhirah 588 A.H. (1192 A.C.).

[468] However, the king of Morocco neither responded to the sultan's request nor offered any kind of support, for he, as was heard, felt offended for not being addressed by "the Commander of the Believers" as he used to be called.(1) He was, however, a fair king and was known for his support for Islam. He died in 595 A.H. (1199 A.C.).

1. This was a pitiful excuse, if true, for he was addressed with noticeable politeness. I omitted some of the expressions to render the message brief. Also, it was not possible that he would be addressed by this title when the Abbasid Caliph was still in Baghdad. Nevertheless, the King of Morocco was known for his piety and Jihad. Judge al-Fadil sent a message to Saladin telling him it was worthless to send this letter to the king of Morocco unless he was addressed as the Commander of the Believers. Al Fadil, the writer of the letter, explained that he had addressed the king of Morocco with remarkable courtesy and mentioned something that indicated his being against such a journey to the king of Morocco for its being in vain.

Chapter CV

Al-Kamin (The Ambush) Battle and Replacing the Troops at Acre[1]

[469] Al-`Imad said:

On Friday the 22nd of Shawwal, the sultan selected some soldiers and supplied them with equipment ordering them to hide at the foot of a mountain in the north of Acre, away from the enemy. They obeyed the commands and remained hiding there that night. By the morning, a few of them marched towards the Franks. They launched a surprising attack. The Franks sent four hundred men, as mentioned by al-`Imad, to confront them. However Ibn Shaddad said that they were only two hundred. Anyway, they felt that the Muslims were few in number and would thus be an easy prey. The Muslim soldiers kept on retreating gradually until they led them to the ambush, where the Muslim soldiers attacked them. Some of them were killed and some others were taken captives, and none of them were able to escape. Some of their prominent people were also taken captives, such as the king's treasurer and a group of prominent French leaders. Hearing the good news, the sultan mounted his horse and stood upon the Hill of Kaysan receiving the captives and the booties. He did not, however, pay such booties, horses, and money the least attention. Rather, he sat with the captives, fed them, gave them clothing and permitted them to send

1. Replacing the soldiers in Acre with others in order to take rest from the exhausting besiege of the city.

their children to fetch whatever they needed. He then sent them to Damascus to be imprisoned.

Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

When winter became bitterly cold and the sea surged, the enemy gave up the idea of besieging the city because of the heavy rain. Only then, did the sultan give permission to the soldiers to return to their countries for rest. Consequently, `Imad ad-Din, the ruler of Sinjar, together with his nephew `Uqaybah, the ruler of aj-Jazirah left on the 15th Shawwal after they had been granted a great honor and a great share in the booties, unlike anybody else. After that, `Ala' ad-Din, the son of the ruler of Mosul, departed on the 1st Dhu al-Qa`dah after having been greatly honored as well. Then, Azh-Zhahir left in Muharram 587 A.H. (1191 A.C.) and Taqiyy ad-Din left in Safar the same year. Only a few princes remained with the sultan.

Al-`Imad said:

The sultan was extremely busy trying to make the substitute soldiers enter Acre together with the provisions and the ammunition. He allowed the princes, who were still in the city, to leave due to their frequent complaints about the pressure they had suffered for a long time and their involvement in successive fights day and night. The leader of the substitutes, prince Sayf ad-Din al-Mashtub, entered the city on the 16th Muharram 587 A.H. (1191 A.C.). On the same day, the then leader of the troops, prince Husam ad-Din abu al-Hayja', left along with his companions and other accompanying princes. Al-Mashtub entered Acre with a large number of princes and some leading personalities, each of whom had to carry sufficient provisions for a whole year.

Al-`Adil then moved with his soldiers to Haifa on the seashore to encourage people to enter the city and protect the provisions and

ammunition against enemy attack. Among the ships that entered the city, there were seven filled with money, provisions, and ammunition arriving from Egypt on Monday the 2nd of Dhu al-Hijjah. However, one of those ships was ship-wrecked upon the rocks near the harbor and so all the soldiers in the city rushed to the seashore to save what they could. When the enemies learnt about this, they marched in massive numbers to the city from the interior of the country. They came near the walls and climbed up a ladder but it fell down carrying all of them with it. Then the people of the city attacked and killed many of them; so they returned totally disappointed.

The ships were destroyed, as the sea was extremely stormy and all those on board (about sixty persons) died. Frustration prevailed over the Muslims and the sultan was very annoyed as it was the first sign of losing the city.

He added:

When winter came and the wind blew, some of the Frankish ships were ship-wrecked. Thus, they moved their ships to Tyre and tied them well for fear of losing them, so they no longer represented a threat.

[470] Our friends in the city became extremely bored, weary, and impatient. They amounted to about twenty thousand including many princes, leaders, fleet-leaders, mariners, merchants, boys, agents, and laborers. They were all stuck there and so the sultan decided to help them out of pity. He was advised to prepare the substitutes and al-`Adil took on the responsibility to arrange this matter, so he moved with his men to the foot of Mount Haifa.

It was decided that those present should be relieved for they were tired and afflicted and had, until then, proved to be patient, strong, and

brave. Among them was Abu al-Hayja' who had many followers and supporters, and who was known for his perseverance. Furthermore, it was said that in that particular year he spent fifty thousand dinar from his own money. When they were permitted to move so as to leave space for the substitutes, they all left except prince Baha' ad-Din Qaraqush who preferred to stay in the city.

Twenty leaders unwillingly entered the city to replace sixty and the substitution process resulted in chaos and waste of time, not to mention that the return of the enemy's ships made conditions even more difficult. Al-Mashtub led the forces entering Acre, but under such difficult circumstances, the city was left with only a few resources, whether human or material. All the substitute soldiers were not at all content with the idea and begged to be excused in return for any kind of compensation. However, when it became inevitable that they would have to go, they asked for more time to prepare themselves.

Al-`Imad said:

On the night of the 7th Dhu al-Hijjah, a huge piece of the wall of the city fell leaving a gaping hole. Seeing this great opportunity, the Franks rushed to it, but the people of the city managed to block the gap with their own bodies and continued to defend the city until they finished rebuilding that part. Eventually it became even stronger than before. Then on the 2nd of Dhu al-Hijjah, the son of the German king died after which everyday one or two hundred Franks would die. The Franks were terribly grieved for the death of their king's son and so they kindled a huge fire near their camp as a symbol of grief.

[471] The Muslims gained a great deal of booties especially after many Franks had approached them, driven by hunger, asking for a promise of safety. They said to the sultan, "Let us cross the sea in

small boats and gain booty from your enemy and divide them between us and the Muslims." The sultan then gave them permission and provided them with a small boat. They succeeded in overcoming ships owned by enemy merchants that were carrying silverware. They took the loot and brought them to the sultan who returned it to them.

Al-`Imad added:

Being generously treated, they praised the sultan and half of them embraced Islam. They then brought the sultan a huge silver table together with a plate that was equal in weight to the table and both of them together made a Kantar in weight. However, the sultan did not pay the least amount of attention to such things.

[472] He went on to say:

Seven Muslim princes died in Acre, among whom was Prince Siwar. In this year, the Muslims' ships met those of the Franks and the Muslims managed to burn many of them. On their return journey, one of our ships, led by Jamal ad-Din Muhammad ibn Arkakz, was still far behind and this tempted the enemy to encircle it. The sailors on that ship jumped into the sea leaving their leader alone to face the enemy. He fought bravely and so they offered to grant him a promise of safety. Yet, he refused to negotiate but with their leader. Believing him to be desperate, their leader came and hugged him but the Muslim prince did not leave him until they fell together in the sea and died together, but on the way leading to Paradise or Hell they got separated from each other.

[473] He stated:

Coming from Egypt, judge al-Fadil arrived at the camp of the victorious Muslims in Dhu al-Hijjah. The sultan was yearning to meet

him for they had been far from each other for two years. In his presence, everything was settled in Egypt and this relieved the sultan for he knew that he could always trust him and depend on his wisdom. It was thus difficult for the sultan to ask him to come, for this would mean risking the stability of the state in Egypt, but at the same time his absence made the sultan feel lonely and anxious for all the decisions made. That was why the sultan used to send him letters consulting him about all important matters. In Dhu al-Hijjah, they were united once again and the sultan was truly happy to have his sincere friend beside him.

Events of 587 A.H. (1191 A.C.)

[474] In this year, the French king, Philip, the British king, Richard I (the Lion-Hearted) and others arrived at the Frankish camp and Acre was taken.

[475] Al-`Imad said:

On the 3rd of Safar, Taqiyy ad-Din `Umar, the nephew of Saladin, went to take over the territories that were joined to his east of the Euphrates. In the Levant, he had al-Ma`arrah, Hamadah, Salamiyyah, Jiblah and al-Ladhiqiyyah; in aj-Jazirah, he had Diyar Bakr, Harran, Edessa, al-Mawzir, Sumaysat and its domains, and Mayyafariqin and its fortresses and castles. He left with a promise to return soon, however, he proceeded slowly and was yearning to conquer the neighboring countries. He headed towards Mayyafariqin, and the sultan considered his absence to be the major reason behind loss of Acre.

[476] On the 9th of Rabi` al-Awwal, forty-five Frankish captives, taken in Beirut, arrived and among them was a toothless old man who had come from a far distant country only to perform pilgrimage in their church in Jerusalem. The sultan pitied him, set him free and sent him to his people mounted on a horse.

[477] The sultan's young children asked him to permit them to kill one of the captives but he refused and justified this, saying, "I fear they get used to shedding blood and consider it something trivial. Perhaps later on they may not be able to differentiate between a Muslim and a polytheist."

[478] Then with the fall of spring, the soldiers returned to the city as was agreed upon and the princes arrived.

[479] News came that the Frankish kings had gathered and were on their way. Then on the 12th of Rabi` al-Awwal, the French king Philip arrived in six great ships filled with brave horsemen and so we said that water was only carrying the people of Hell-fire. The French king was one of their great kings whose word was obeyed by all. He had a great falcon of a rare species which was huge and white in color. It was very dear and precious to the king and one day it flew from his hand and fell upon the walls of Acre. The people took it and sent it to the sultan. The Franks offered to pay one thousand dinars to have it back but their request was denied.

Al-`Imad said,

`Izz ad-Din Samah was the ruler of Beirut at that time. The only route the enemy warships could take was the one that passed the city. Whenever a warship passed by, his men would capture it, even if the ship was prepared to fight back. As a result, they managed to amass a lot of wealth. The king of England arrived at Cyprus on the 26th Rabi`

al-Akhir and exerted great effort to control it. For this reason he arrived at a later time in Acre. Afterwards, some of his ships reached the city and Samah attacked them and captured five warships filled with men, women, money, and horses.

[480] In az-Zayb (north Acre), there was a group of Muslims who used to prepare the warships that would enter Acre and block the way for the Franks.

The judge said:

Among the Muslims, there were some men who used to sneak through the enemy's camp and capture whatever they could find, even the Frankish men themselves. One night, they took an infant and the infant's mother kept on weeping and wailing all night until the Frankish kings came to know about her story. They advised her, "The sultan is merciful; we give you permission to go and ask him to give back your baby."

So the woman went out crying for help until she reached the vanguard of the Muslim army. She told them her story, so they sent her to the sultan. Meanwhile, the sultan was on the back of his horse above the Hill of al-Kharrubah and I was there with him. When he saw the woman, crying pitifully he asked what had happened and felt great sympathy for her. He ordered his men to find her baby. The men, however, found that the baby had been sold in the market, so the sultan ordered that the one who bought him must hand over the baby and take back his money. He stood there until he saw the mother holding her infant and pressing him to her bosom while people stood there watching, with their eyes filled with tears. She then breastfed him for awhile, and the sultan ordered his soldiers to take her back to the enemy's camp with her child. What great mercy! O Allah, You have created him to be merciful, so envelop him with Your Mercy.

Chapter CVI

The Enemy Capturing Acre

[481] Al-`Imad said:

On Thursday, 4th Jumada al-Ula, the Franks marched to Acre and set up seven Catapults around it. Letters arrived from the people of Acre to the sultan calling him along with all the Muslims to participate in *Jihad*. As soon as he heard the news, the sultan rode out with his soldiers. He used to do so whenever the Franks planned to attack the city. If they attacked the city, they would find the sultan preparing to attack them, so they would retreat cowardly. And later when he calls off the attack, they would attack the city once again.

The Judge said:

They tightened their siege of the city and the ditches overflowed with the bodies of their animals and their soldiers.

The people of the city were divided into groups: A group went down the ditch and cut the bodies into pieces so they would be easily carried, while another group carried the torn pieces and dumped them into the sea. Yet another group would defend them and one was put in charge of the catapults to guard the wall of the city. They were terribly exhausted, and were continuously complaining about their miserable conditions.

It was an unprecedented affliction. The sultan (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) continued to block their way and went on fighting

them in their ditches day and night in order to divert them from attacking the city. However, they kept on hitting the tower of `Ayn al-Baqar with their catapults until it was badly affected. The fiercer their attack upon the city, the more ferocious the sultan's counter-attack. This state of affairs continued until the arrival of the king of England.[1]

[482] He added:

On 16th Jumada al-Ula, a gigantic ship arrived from Beirut. It was carrying equipment, provisions, and many soldiers. The sultan had ordered his men to prepare to take the enemy by surprise and enter the city. There were six hundred and fifty Muslim soldiers on board this ship. However, the British king blocked its way with about forty ships. Those ships encircled the Muslim warship from all directions and attacked it fiercely. Unfortunately, the wind stopped and enabled the Franks to fight it easily. However, despite the odds, the Muslims managed to kill many of the enemy soldiers and even burnt one of their huge warships and all those on board. The enemy intensified their attack against the Muslim warship whose leader was a brave man from Aleppo called Ya`qub. Seeing the signs of their own defeat, Ya`qub swore that they would destroy their warship in order not to leave anything for the enemy to utilize. Consequently, the Muslim troops started to tear up the warship using their pickaxes and managed to make a hole in one side. The water soon overflowed the warship and all on board sank along with their equipment and provisions. The enemy took some of the drowned bodies to their own warships, mutilated them and then sent them to the city as proof that the battle had taken place. The people were terribly sad when they knew about it, but the sultan endured that affliction with great patience.

1. Richard I.

[483] He added:

Meanwhile, the enemy constructed a gigantic tank made up of four layers: from wood, lead, iron, and copper. It was higher than a wall and there was a place for the soldiers to use when riding in it. The people of the city were so terrified of that tank that they thought of asking for protection. The Franks located the tank next to the city wall and drew near until it was only five arms away from it. The people of the city continued to hit that tank with oil day and night until they managed, by Allah's Will, to burn it. Their loud and joyful cries praising and glorifying Allah resounded in every place and they regarded this victory as compensation for their warship that had sunk that day.

Several battles then took place during that month, Jumada al-Ula, and the Muslims attacked the enemy camp. However, news arrived continuously from the people of the city about the aggravating danger of the enemy, especially after the arrival of the king of England. The British king became seriously ill and was about to die, whereas the French king was wounded; however, that only added to the enemy's ferocity, arrogance, and determination. Two servants then fled to the sultan and mentioned that they were in the service of the British king's sister and that they were hiding their faith in Allah, and so the sultan accepted and honored them. The Marquis then fled to Tyre for he felt that they would certainly banish him.

[484] Al-`Imad said:

At the end of Jumada al-Ula, Mujahid ad-Din Bartaqsh arrived with the troops of Sinjar, and on 2nd Jumada al-Akhirah, the son of the ruler of Mosul arrived together with a group of princes from Egypt. The soldiers of Diyar Bakr were late and excused themselves by

mentioning their fear of being near to Taqiyy ad-Din (Saladin's nephew) who had attacked as-Suwayda' and others. This grieved the sultan, so he said, "He was tempted by nothing but the cursed devil. It is really bad that he is being hated at such a critical time; I am worried about him for he is acting foolishly and badly where he was supposed to act aright. The illness of the king of England worsened and this in turn delayed the Franks from marching to the city. It was a great gift from Allah for at that time the people of the city were overwhelmed with weariness and exhaustion, not to mention that the enemy's catapults had badly affected the wall of the city. Therefore, this came at the appropriate time to allow the people in the city to catch their breath.

The Judge said:

The sultan then received many meaningless messages from the Franks, which only intended to waste time and weaken the Muslims' spirits. Meanwhile, the Franks were very busy intensifying their siege of the city and hitting its wall continuously and aggressively. Then, they marched with great determination towards it. Consequently, weakness and exhaustion prevailed in the city, and its wall became fragile. The people were worn out owing to the tremendous efforts they had exerted. There were not so many people in the city and, at the same time, they had to carry out many tasks to the extent that one group was forced to stay awake day and night for several days. On the other hand, the Franks were great in number, and used to take shifts in fighting. The battle reached its utmost ferocity on 7th Jumada al-Akhirah.

[485] The sultan mounted his horse encouraging and urging the Muslim soldiers to follow him. He marched to the enemy's ditches, and his soldiers then entered those ditches and surprised the Franks. After that a fierce fight took place. The sultan kept on moving here

and there calling the Muslims to fight Allah's enemy. Whenever he looked at Acre and remembered how it had been greatly afflicted and how its people had been seriously tried, he would fight with even more ferocity. That day, he ate nothing and drank only something that a physician had advised him to drink. Then when the night came, he returned to the camp feeling depressed, grieved, and exhausted. Again in the early morning he mounted his horse and did the same as the day before.

A message arrived from the people of Acre telling the sultan that they had exerted their utmost effort and could no longer continue the fight. They also added that if the sultan and his men did nothing the following day to help them, they would ask for a promise of protection to save their souls. This message had the worst effect upon the Muslims, as Acre contained many weapons from the coast, Jerusalem, Damascus, Aleppo, and Egypt. Upon hearing this, the sultan decided to attack the enemy, however he found no one to support him from his own men for they had heard that the Franks were standing ready and waiting behind the walls. Some people attacked them but to no avail.

Some of those who managed to sneak through their walls related that one of the Franks had climbed up the wall of their ditch and kept on throwing stones at the Muslims. He was hit by about fifty arrows and stones; however, it did not stop him from what he was doing until he was burnt by oil thrown at him.

[486] A woman was seen using a wooden bow, and she wounded a group of the Muslims. Eventually, she was killed and carried to the sultan who was amazed to know what she had done. The fight continued until nightfall and, meanwhile, the people of the city were very much frustrated and exhausted. The enemy captured the ditches and made a hole in the city's wall and then burnt it.

[487] A message was sent to Muzhaffar ad-Din, the ruler of Irbil, which read, "When our friends saw the danger coming towards them, a group of princes whose faith in Allah was weak, fled away. They were blinded by their profligacy and so it was easy for them to betray their Islam at that critical moment. Their cowardly escape increased the enemy's desire to seize the city and fear filled their brothers' hearts. Those, however, who were noble enough to stay, decided that they should not fear death or give up until they had killed as many as they could from the enemy's soldiers, and that they should defend their city. They had negotiated previously with the Franks about surrendering but the latter went too far and made very difficult conditions that were rejected, and so the Muslims decided to adopt the policy of patience and to fight vigorously."

The Judge said:

By night, the sultan mounted his horse and prepared to launch a surprise attack against the enemy taking with him the sweepers and machines for the overflowing ditches; however, the soldiers refused to follow him. That day, three messengers arrived from the king of England asking for fruit and ice. They mentioned something about the arrival of another messenger who would come the day after to negotiate with them about reconciliation. The sultan welcomed them and allowed them to enter the market and pick what they wanted, and then they returned to their camp at night.

The sultan sent a message to prince Qaymaz an-Najmi ordering him and his troops to sneak through the enemy's walls and attack them. A group of the Kurdish princes then dismounted and marched to the Frankish walls, and Qaymaz set up his banner upon their wall with his own hands and fought under it for a part of the day. Also, `Izz ad-Din Jurdik an-Nuri arrived while the troops were still marching,

and he and his troops dismounted and fought with great valor. On that day, the Muslims exerted tremendous effort and proved their bravery.

[488] Al-`Imad said:

The sultan realized that the people of Acre could no longer bear the imminent danger and he knew the city would be taken, so he secretly sent for the people of Acre and told them, "Beware of the enemy! Leave the city together and walk by the sea. If you meet the enemy, you should attack them and leave the city as it is; take nothing from it." However, the people were busy preparing their possessions to take with them and they disregarded the sultan's advice. Morning came and the following night but still they had not finished. Then finally they could not leave the city because the enemy came to know about their plans.

He commented:

Had the people listened to the sultan, the plan would have been successful. However, the Franks came to know about the secret from two runaway slaves and they hurried to guard all the gates and sides of the city.

He added:

On Friday, the 10^{th} of that month, a group of Frankish messengers came while the war was still continuing. The sultan thus sent for Najib ad-Din al-`Adl and assigned him to be responsible for the correspondence between them and the Franks, but both sides failed to reach an agreement. We offered them to take Acre with all that it contained but without capturing its people, and to set some of their prisoners free; but they refused and were excessive in their demands. So we offered to give them the Cross in addition, but again they were not satisfied.

He continued:

Saturday morning was over and nothing had been achieved. On Sunday, the 12th of that month, a letter arrived from the city saying, "We have agreed to face death courageously; so do not ever give up to that enemy. It is already too late for us to do anything." The swimmer who brought the letter mentioned that a voice had been heard that night and it troubled both sides. The Franks thought that many Muslim troops had crossed to Acre, and as a result they tightened their besiege when the city was about to be taken.

Among those who arrived from the Muslim troops were Sabiq ad-Din, the ruler of Shayzar, Badr ad-Din Daldram who arrived with many Turks to whom the sultan had sent gold, and the ruler of Hims. Meanwhile, the city grew weaker and weaker and its wall was full of gaps, so the people built a wall from inside on which to fight in case the outer wall collapsed. The Franks insisted on denying reconciliation or granting the people of the city a promise of protection, unless the Muslims set all their prisoners free and returned the coastal cities to them.

On Friday, the 17th of that month, a swimmer arrived with letters relating how fed up the people of Acre were. They were confident that the moment their city was captured, they would be killed and all the equipment, weapons, and boats would be seized. For this reason the people of the city made an agreement with the Franks. They offered to hand over the city to them along with all the machines, equipment, and boats in it, as well as two hundred thousand dinars, a thousand and five hundred captives, a hundred specified captives whom they could choose, and the Cross. In return, they should allow them to leave the city safely with their own money, clothing, children, and women. They also granted the cursed Marquis ten thousand dinars for his role as a mediator and four thousand dinars for his companions.

The sultan renounced this agreement, refused to acknowledge it, and decided to send them a letter informing them of his opinion after discussing the matter with his governors and consultants. However, before sending anything, the Muslims saw the banners, crosses, and fires of polytheism being raised upon the walls of the city and that was at noon on Friday, 17th Jumada al-Akhirah. The Franks cried out loudly and joyfully. It was a great affliction for the Muslims, and they felt totally helpless and terribly grieved. The people were overwhelmed by great confusion, and the troops continued to weep and the whole atmosphere was filled with grief and sorrow.

Then the Marquis entered the city with four banners; he raised one upon the castle, one upon the minaret of the mosque on Friday, one upon the tower of the Templars, and one upon the battle tower - instead of the banner of Islam. He also banished the Muslims to the outskirts of the city. All this occurred while the Muslims, who were watching, were overwhelmed with amazement.

[489] He added:

I was in the service of the sultan (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) the evening of that day and he was in a terrible state and looked like a mother who had lost her child. I tried to entertain him and divert his mind from thinking about what had taken place. I talked to him about Jerusalem and about how we should think of a way to rescue the Muslims imprisoned in the city.

He went on saying:

The French king then decided to return to his territory for some reason and so he handed some of the Muslim prisoners to the Marquis, authorized him to take his share, and approved to let him act on his behalf. On Thursday, which was the end of the month, the Franks left

the seaside and spread out throughout the lands there until they reached the wells dug by the Muslim army. They fought against the Muslims and the sultan sent some troops to support the Muslim army there. In this way they managed to defeat the enemy and kill fifty of their cavalry.

The Judge said:

Large numbers of the Franks fled, but the Muslims kept on fighting them fiercely until they forced them to go down their ditches.

[490] He added:

Both sides continually exchanged letters. On Friday, the 10^{th} of Rajab, Husam ad-Din Husayn ibn Tarik al-Muhrani along with two of the British king's followers, came and spoke of the French king's arrival at Tyre and of setting the prisoners free. They demanded to see the Cross so they could know whether it was in the camp or had been taken to Baghdad. Thus, the Cross was brought to them and when they saw it, they glorified it, threw themselves on the ground, rolled their faces in the dust and were seen to be in a state of extreme humility. Besides, they mentioned that the kings approved of the sultan's demand that the money agreed upon should be paid in installments over three months.

Messengers continued to arrive successively until their request was granted and they took over six hundred prisoners, a hundred thousand dinars, and the Cross. But they did not specify hundred prisoners; they kept on delaying this matter until the first month was over on the 18^{th} of Rajab.

That day they sent a message to the sultan asking for these captives, but the sultan refused and said, "Either you send us our friends and take your money then we shall give you a pledge for the rest of the money that you will get in the coming months, or give us a

pledge on the money we give you until you hand over our friends to us." They replied, "We won't do anything! You give us the money assigned for this month and trust us until we hand over your friends." The sultan rejected their suggestion for he was sure that once they would take the money, the Cross and the prisoners, they would betray the Muslims.

The Franks set up their tents outside their ditches and rode their horses in the afternoon of the 27th of Rajab. They marched until they reached the wells below al-`Iyadiyyah and there they brought some of the Muslim prisoners, who were destined to die as martyrs. There were about three thousand Muslims all tied with ropes and in one strike they killed the Franks with their swords. The vanguard of the Muslim army saw them but they did not realize what was happening to them, as they were far away.

The head of the Muslim army sent a message to the sultan informing him that the Franks were ready to fight. Consequently, he sent them extra troops. The Muslim troops attacked them and a fierce battle took place and many were killed and wounded on both sides. The fight continued until nightfall, and in the morning the Muslims saw the martyrs lying on the ground. They identified some of them and were overwhelmed by deep sorrow.

Al-`Imad said:

The sultan asked them to let the Templars guarantee them if they took the money. But the Templars refused to do so and they advised the Muslims to be content with their promise!

Al-`Imad commented on the martyrs:

We saw them naked in the desert. Undoubtedly, Allah has covered them with the cloth of Paradise and has taken them to His Eternal Bliss.

He added:

Then the sultan spent that money to mobilize the troops, and he kept the Frankish prisoners. Moreover, he decided to keep the Cross in order to fill the hearts of the enemy with deep grief and sorrow. The Romans, and many of their leaders, tried successively to offer the sultan enormous amounts of money in return for the Cross; but their request was never granted.

Chapter CVII

The Events that Took place After Capturing Acre

Al-`Imad said:

The Franks headed for Ashkelon in the beginning of Sha`ban and the Muslims, seizing the opportunity, wounded and killed as many as possible of them. Whenever a prisoner was brought to the sultan, he would order that the prisoner be killed. Finally the Franks reached Jaffa and settled there.

He added:

The sultan then went to Ashkelon in the afternoon and started carrying out his plan. Before his arrival, the sultan sent for his brother al-`Adil and for the senior princes to consult with them about the best things to be done for the city. `Alam ad-Din ibn Sulayman ibn Jundur advised him to destroy the city because they were unable to protect it against the enemy. They all agreed with him and said, "It is beyond

our capacity to protect it against the enemy. They settled in Jaffa which is located between Jerusalem and Ashkelon, and there is no way to guard both cities simultaneously, so concentrate your effort upon the most important of them (referring to Jerusalem) and fortify it well." Thus, it was finally decided that al-`Adil would stay near Jaffa with ten princes so that if the enemy moved, they could inform the sultan.

The Judge said:

He advised him to destroy Ashkelon lest the enemy seize it and use it to conquer Jerusalem and thus block the way to Egypt. The sultan was afraid of all these things. Besides, he lacked confidence in the Muslims' ability to protect it, especially after what had befallen Acre and its people. Thus, He marched to Ashkelon and set up his tent in the north of the city. He spent the night grieving at the idea of having to destroy the city. He called me before daybreak, although we had seen each other just a few hours ago. We discussed the issue of destroying the city and he also sent for his son al-Afdal and consulted him.

He (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) said, "By Allah, having to loose all my children is less painful for me than having to destroy one stone of Ashkelon. However, if this is Allah's Will and it is in the Muslims' interest, I have no other choice." He performed *Istikharah* Prayer and then Allah guided him to the idea of destroying the city. He sent for the ruler of the city and commanded him to carry out the plan and this took place in the 19th of Sha`ban. I saw him riding his horse and urging the people to ruin the city. Then he divided the mission of destroying the wall among the people. The city was soon filled with noise and confusion. It was a nice, prosperous, and well-fortified city that was favored by people and so they became terribly grieved about having to destroy it. Meanwhile, the sultan himself, together with his son al-Afdal, was encouraging people to

hurry, for fear that the enemy might hear about their plan and launch a surprising attack.

The people then destroyed the granary and the sultan gave his orders to set the whole city on fire. Meanwhile, news came that the enemy had settled in Jaffa and was working on populating it. Most of the city's wall was ruined even though it was massive and well-built. The destruction and burning process continued until the end of Sha`ban. A letter arrived from Jurdik mentioning that the Franks had left Jaffa and started to attack the closer cities, and furthermore, stating that it would be beneficial if the sultan moved and attacked them. Thus, the sultan decided to leave and to keep some stonecutters in Ashkelon together with horses to protect them, in order to carry through the destruction process. He then decided to wait until al-Isbitar Tower would be burnt for it was huge and next to the sea, and was like a well-fortified castle. I entered that tower, looked around and saw how firmly built it was and that no pickax could ever affect it. For that reason, it was set on fire and it continued to burn for two whole days.

Al-`Imad said:

All the towers onshore were demolished and I remembered when I first entered the city, it was strong and well-fortified; so I wept for a long time and the sultan did not leave until it was in ruins.

Had we tried to protect the city from the enemy, it would have been possible. However, everyone was afraid and did not want to be involved in any situation like what had occurred previously in Acre. The people saw what had happened to Acre after three years and were afraid of repeating the same dilemma. Thus, destroying the city was something inevitable and its people were forced to leave it after being used to live there in luxury.

Chapter CVIII

The Incidents That Took Place After the Destruction of Ashkelon

Ibn Shaddad said:

The king of England sent a message to al-`Adil expressing his desire for reconciliation. He claimed that he had a sister who was very dear to him and who was married to one of their great kings, the ruler of Sicily, but he had died. He thus wanted her to be married to al-`Adil, and in return, he would let him rule the coastal cities. His sister would live in Jerusalem after her marriage and the priests there would help her preserve her religion. Al-`Adil thought that this was a reasonable proposal. When he consulted the sultan, the latter agreed with him. Al-`Adil sent his approval to the king of England. However, the Franks frightened the woman and accused her of betraying her religion saying that such a marriage would be a terrible scandal and a horrible insult to them all and to Christianity. Furthermore, they told her that she would be guilty of disobeying Christ. Reflecting on the matter, the woman refused to marry to al-`Adil and the king of England sent him an apology telling him that his sister refused to marry him unless he became a Christian. Hereupon, al-`Adil realized that the whole thing was just a trick.

The Judge said:

A messenger arrived from the Marquis mentioning that he would like to be reconciled with the Muslims on one condition, that he would

be given Sayda and Beirut. If this happened, he would announce his enmity towards the Franks and march to Acre and seize it from them. His request was granted provided that he set free all the prisoners in Acre and Tyre. When the king of England heard about this, he returned to Acre to cancel that agreement and to win the Marquis again to his side.

[491] The Judge added:

The king of England sent a message to the sultan telling him that both the Muslims and the Franks were worn out because of continual warfare, that their territories were destroyed, the wealth was wasted and the whole matter had gone too far. He told him that Jerusalem was a sacred place for them and that they would not give it up even if they had to die. He said they only wanted the cities that were across Jordan. He also said that the Cross might be meaningless for the Muslims, yet for them it is highly valuable and that the sultan could easily give it to them to ease their hearts.

The sultan replied, "Jerusalem is ours as it is yours; however, it is much more significant for us than it is for you. It is the place from which the Prophet (peace be upon him) started his Night Journey and the place where the angels gather. Thus, it is impossible to give it up or even to contemplate the idea. The cities are originally ours, and your occupation is something temporary, for you only seized them when their Muslim rulers were weak. Destroying the Cross is considered to be something great for our religion and we must not miss this chance except for something more beneficial for Islam."

News came that the Franks intended to march. Consequently, the sultan left his camp in an-Natrun to ar-Ramlah on the 7th of Shawwal and during that time several battles took place. On the 18th of Shawwal,

al-`Adil and the king of England gathered to talk after which they left on good terms. The king of England asked al-`Adil to let him meet the sultan, however the latter refused saying, "When kings meet and disagree, it becomes very difficult to solve matters later on. If there is an agreement, then it is all right for them to meet." The Franks then left and went to ar-Ramlah on the 3rd of Dhu al-Qa`dah marching towards Jerusalem. Both sides continued to battle, and on the 23rd of Dhu al-Qa`dah. the sultan left and went to Jerusalem in order to settle there. It was then winter and the rain poured down heavily.

[492] On the 3rd of Dhu al-Hijjah, fifty men arrived from Mosul. The sultan decided to fortify Jerusalem, strengthen its towers and walls, and dig ditches around. This was why he had sent for those men who were specialized in such fields. The sultan himself worked with them moving and carrying the stones, together with his sons, princes, soldiers, judges, scholars, and rulers.

Events of 588 A.H. (1192 A.C.)

Al-`Imad said:

On the 13th of Rabi` al-Akhir, the Marquis was murdered in Tyre. Two men from al-Hashishiyyah entered Tyre and pretended that they were Christians leading a monastic life. They stayed in the church where they were showered with praise. The Marquis became fond of them and of their company. One day, they jumped on the Marquis and killed him after which they were taken and killed.

Then, Amalric assumed power upon the orders of the British king who was so glad that the Marquis had been killed, for the latter used to

oppose him in everything seeking the sultan's support against him. Amalric then married the wife of the murdered Marquis who was then pregnant. However, in their religion, pregnancy does not prohibit marriage and so the baby was related to the Queen, the wife of the Marquis. Amalric was the paternal nephew of the French king, and the maternal nephew of the British king. The Franks approved of him as a ruler, and he lived till the end of 594 A.H. (1198 A.C.). Thus, he ruled for less than seven years.

Al-`Imad added:

On the 9th of Jumada al-Ula, the Franks seized ad-Darum Castle, destroyed it and left it after taking its occupants captives. Then, they came upon as-Safiyah Hill, an-Natrun and Bayt Nawbah, which was in the middle of the mountains and far from Jerusalem. The constant attacks of the Muslims weakened their morale, and the sultan's stay in Jerusalem was the main cause behind the Muslims' great enthusiasm. By the end of the month, the two sides met at Qalwaniyyah which was a short distance from Jerusalem. Seeing that their defeat was inevitable, the Franks retreated and the Muslims continued to pursue them.

All these incidents took place while both kings, al-`Adil and al-Afdal, were absent. Besides, the soldiers of Sinjar, Mosul and Diyar Bakr were proceeding slowly for fear of Taqiyy ad-Din, who was then dead and whose son insisted on inheriting his kingdom.

Chapter CIX

The Franks' Intention to Head for Jerusalem

[493] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

The sultan ordered the Egyptian soldiers to march and advised them to be on their guard when they approach the enemy. They stayed in Nablus for days until the caravans arrived, however news of their march reached the enemy. They headed for Jerusalem with the enemy spying on them. Later on when the enemy became sure that the caravans were on their way back, their leaders ordered the troops to wait for them at the foot of the mountain. The sultan sent a warning to the caravans that the enemy was on its way to fight them and advised them to move far away into the desert.

The king of England, disguised as an Arab, rode his horse accompanied by some corrupt Arabs and few of his men, and they all marched until they reached the Muslim caravans. He found the Muslims there sleeping; so he hurried back to his soldiers and ordered them to prepare for a surprising attack before the morning. The Franks attacked with great enthusiasm.

The caravans were divided into three groups: a group headed for al-Karak with some Arabs, the second moved far away into the desert with some Arabs as well, and the last were captured by the enemy along with all their camels and luggage. It was the most terrible battle the Muslims had experienced for a very long time. The Muslims were dispersed throughout the desert and threw away their wealth to save

their souls. The enemy thus gathered all the horses, donkeys, cloth, and many other precious things.

Some of those taken captives related that the enemy had heard that the soldiers of the sultan were pursuing them. Thus, they escaped, leaving all their booties behind. However, on finding out that it was only a rumor, they returned after many prisoners had already fled.

On the 16th of Jumada al-Akhirah, the Franks arrived at their camp and it was a great day for them. Indeed, they became even more determined to enter Jerusalem, especially after seizing all the money, camels, and provisions of the caravan. They sent Amalric to Tyre, Tripoli and Acre to bring the troops there in order to march toward Jerusalem. When the sultan knew this, he divided the mission of guarding and defending the walls of the city among his princes. He also worked to destroy the wells around Jerusalem so that no water would reach the enemy, and sent for the soldiers in all the territories.

[494] He added:

On Thursday night, the 19th of Jumada al-Akhirah, the sultan held a meeting with his princes among whom were Abu al-Hayja' as-Samin, al-Mashtub, the family of al-Asadiyyah and many others. He then asked me to urge them to be enthusiastic and perform *Jihad* and I did.

Part of what I said was, "When the situation became difficult for the Prophet (peace be upon him), his Companions pledged allegiance with him to die as martyrs for the Sake of Allah. Therefore, we should follow their example. Let us, thus, gather at the Rock and agree to die for the Sake of Allah, for He may grant us victory over our enemy just for our good intention."

They all agreed to take part in *Jihad*. After remaining silent for a long time, the sultan said, "Praise be to Allah and may His Blessings

and Peace be upon His Messenger. You should bear in mind that you are today the troops of Islam and its defenders. Keep in mind that the safety of the Muslims' souls, wealth, and children depends upon you, and that you alone are qualified to meet that enemy and fight. So, if you forsake your responsibility of *Jihad*, then the enemy would seize the territories of Islam and you shall be held totally responsible. Therefore, bear in mind that the Muslims' hopes are pending on you."

Sayf ad-Din al-Mashtub was then chosen to speak on behalf of those who were present. He said, "O sire! We are your servants. You were the one who bestowed honor upon us and made us prominent, powerful, and rich. Thus, we offer you our souls; the only thing we own, and we swear by Allah that we shall never cease supporting you until the day we die." The sultan was very pleased to hear that and he offered them food and after eating they left.

The whole atmosphere was charged with enthusiasm and great determination. In the evening of that day, we gathered as usual in his service, but he was not at ease. We then performed the *`Isha'* Prayer, which meant that we should leave. After praying, the sultan called me and said, "Do you know the latest news?" I answered, "No." He said, "Abu al-Hayja' as-Samin sent a message to me saying, 'A group of the Mameluke princes have gathered in my place and blamed us for accepting the idea of preparing for the besiege. They said: 'It is not a good idea, as we may experience the same hardships as the people of Acre suffered, and the Muslim territories will become an easy target for the enemy. Therefore, we should march out and meet the enemy: if Allah grants us victory over them, we shall possess the rest of their territories; and if we are defeated, then our troops will be safe, and can return to Jerusalem. In doing so, we shall succeed in preserving both the territories of Islam and the Muslim soldiers.'

It was a very hard message to the sultan and I stayed with him that night until morning and he (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) continued to pray all night.

[495] He went on:

The sultan was thinking about staying, however, he realized that it was not a good idea, for it would be a threat to the unity of Muslims. The morning was approaching and so I advised him to sleep even for an hour. I then left to go home and on my way I heard the *Adhan*, so I started to perform ablution. I usually performed the *Fajr* Prayer with the sultan, so I returned to him and found him performing ablution too. We then prayed and I told him, "I have an idea. You are exhausted from thinking about this matter; it seems that you cannot find a way out so resort to Almighty Allah, especially today which is Friday, the most blessed day. Our Prophet (peace be upon him) told us that there is an hour on that day in which Allah grants whoever asks Him his wish. Bear in mind also that we are in one of the most blessed places, Jerusalem. You should take a shower for the Friday Prayer, give some charity in secret, perform two *Rak`ahs* between the *Adhan* and the *Iqamah* (the second call for prayer) and invoke the Almighty, leaving everything to Him. Almighty Allah may thus shower you with His Mercy and guide you to the best choice."

The sultan (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) was pious and he used to accept any religious advice with great obedience. It was then the time to perform the Friday Prayer and I stood beside him in al-Aqsa Mosque. He performed two *Rak`ahs* and I saw him prostrating in great humility and his tears kept falling.

While we were in his service on Friday evening, a message came from Jurdik who was one of the leaders of the Muslim army. He

mentioned in his message, "All the Franks have gathered on the land and returned to their camp. We sent our spies to bring us their news."

On Saturday morning, another message came affirming that the spies had returned and affirmed that a disagreement had taken place among the Franks about whether to head for Jerusalem or to return to their territories. The French wanted to march to Jerusalem, claiming that they had only come for that purpose and so would not return until they had taken possession of it. The English king said, "The water has been spoilt in that place, and there is no other source of water around. It will be impossible to go there and stay without water."

They told him, "We will drink from the Naqu` River, which is only a short distance from Jerusalem." He asked, "How can we go there to bring the water?" They answered, "We shall divide ourselves into two groups: one group will go there with the animals to bring water while the other will stay in the city." The king of England said, "This means that the soldiers who go with the animals will be an easy prey for the Muslim citizens and the Muslim soldiers will be able to defeat those in the city. Thus, Christianity will be destroyed." It was then determined that they would leave the decision for three hundred of their notables, who made up their minds to leave the decision for twelve of them who also decided to leave the decision for another three of them.

In the morning, those three men ordered everyone to leave and nobody was able to disobey their order or even argue about it. On the 21st of Jumada al-Akhirah, the Franks started out on their journey and headed for ar-Ramlah after giving up their intention, praise be to Allah. Their traces were the only thing they left. When the Muslims heard that the enemy had withdrawn to ar-Ramlah, they felt very happy and thanked the Almighty.

Chapter CX

The Proposal of Reconciliation from the English King

[496] Judge Ibn Shaddad scrutinized this matter even more precisely than al-`Imad.

Ibn Shaddad said:

The king of England sent a message to the sultan which read, "We are both worn out by incessant fight, so it would be better that we simply stop the bloodshed. Nevertheless, do not think that I am making this offer out of weakness, rather I believe that it is for the best interest of all of us. Do not be deceived by my departure, for it may be simply a sign that I am preparing to attack you again with even more ferocity. You should not expose the Muslims to annihilation and I should not do the same to the Franks. Therefore, I have given my nephew, Amalric, those countries and I am putting him, together with his soldiers, under your control; if you call them to head for the East, they will obey immediately. I learnt that a group of monks asked you for certain churches, and you generously granted them their wish, so now I am asking you for a church. As for those things[1] that usually annoyed you when we were negotiating with al-`Adil, we shall not talk about them again and I shall be satisfied with anything you offer me.

1. Asking for Jerusalem, a part of the Levant, and the Cross.

Then, the sultan consulted with his princes who advised him to accept the proposal of reconciliation, especially since the Muslims were in a state of exhaustion. Thus, they all agreed to send the following reply, "Since you seem to have good intentions, we cannot but accept your offer of reconciliation. Your nephew will be like one of my children and you shall see how kindly he will be treated. I shall give you the largest church, namely the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. As for the rest of the cities, they will be divided between us. The coastal cities that are now in your possession will remain yours and the mountainous forts that we control will remain ours. The cities in between them, will be divided half-and-half. However, Ashkelon and the cities behind it are only ruins and will belong to neither of us, but if you wish to have their villages, then they are yours, although I hate to talk about Ashkelon."

With great satisfaction, the messenger took this reply and hurried to the Franks. Later on, we heard that after the arrival of the messenger, the Franks left Ashkelon heading for Egypt. A messenger arrived from Qutb ad-Din ibn Qalij Arsalan saying that the Pope had arrived in Constantinople with large numbers of soldiers. The messenger then said, "I hurried as much as I could to deliver that message to you and even twelve horses died from exhaustion along the way. He tells you, 'Send me someone to take over my countries for I cannot defend them.'" The sultan did not believe that and paid no heed to it.

Afterwards, the messenger of the king of England arrived asking for the sultan's permission to place twenty of his men in the Castle of Jerusalem. He also asked him to ensure the security of the Frankish Christians living there and to give the Franks the coastal lands and keep the mountainous regions. The messenger then voluntarily told

them that the Franks had given up talking about Jerusalem except to visit it. He added that they wished to be reconciled with the Muslims and that the English king was obliged to return to his country. He then advised the sultan to tell them in his reply that they had nothing to do with Jerusalem except to visit it, and he assured that they would be treated kindly. Ad-Darum and some other cities should be destroyed and the land divided half-and-half. Moreover, they would have all the cities from Jaffa to Tyre, and if there was a disagreement in any of the villages; it would be divided half-and-half.

The messenger then said, "The king is begging not to destroy these places, for they are highly significant for us and their destruction would benefit you nothing. He insists on retrieving them only because his people are determined not to leave them. Moreover, he has totally given up Jerusalem, and asks to drive all the priests and monks out except those in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. So, he asks you to leave him those countries in order to have a comprehensive reconciliation. They will thus have all the cities from ad-Darum to Antioch, and you will have all the cities that are already under your sovereignty. If this reconciliation is not finalized, the Franks will not allow him to return to his country, and he will be forced to fight."

Al-`Imad said:

A general truce was then concluded and the Franks were granted the cities from Jaffa up to Qaysariyyah and from Acre to Tyre. They also included Tripoli and Antioch. The duration of that truce was three years and three months starting from the beginning of September, 21st of Sha`ban. The Franks filled Jaffa with men, weapons, and provisions to support them in conquering Jerusalem, as this was part of their short term plan.

[497] Judge al-Fadil wrote in one of his messages. "The Franks and their king, the king of England, are known for their betrayal and treachery; the clear-cut proof of that is what they did to the people of Acre.

Perfidy is ingrained in Delilah's nature
How traitorous is that tempting creature

They decided to reconcile only when they felt themselves in a state of weakness, and they will break their oath the moment they regain their power and strength. We can do nothing but wait and see what will happen to the king of England, for he will either die - and this will be very nice knowing that he will join his dear friends the Marquis, the Duke, and the king of Germany in Hellfire - or recover; in that case he may thus be drowned in the sea or he will again show his true face by breaking his promises and waiting for the first opportunity to attack us again."

Chapter CXI

The Incidents That Followed the Truce

The Judge said:

The sultan ordered that the truce between the Muslims and the Franks should be announced in the markets, and any Frank who wanted to enter our countries would be welcomed, and vice versa. He also announced that the pilgrimage is now allowed through the way of the Levant and declared his intention to perform *Hajj* in that assembly, and

I witnessed all these events. The day of reconciliation was a historic day for both sides and they were all overwhelmed with joy and happiness.

[498] Allah knows that the sultan was not fond of the idea of reconciliation for he said to me more than once, "I am afraid that this reconciliation will be an opportunity for the enemy to regain their power and strength and then march to take back the rest of the territories." His words came true later on; however, he believed it was then better to maintain the truce for his soldiers were very tired. Anyway, soon after the reconciliation was made, the sultan died. Had he died at the time of war, it would have been a great threat to Islam.

The sultan left to an-Natrun and the people of both sides were mixed together. A group of the Muslims went to Jaffa for trade, whereas large numbers of the Franks arrived at Jerusalem to perform pilgrimage. The sultan welcomed them and sent guards to protect them until they were ready to return to Jaffa. By doing so, he only wanted to guarantee that they would perform their pilgrimage and then return to their countries quietly without causing any trouble to the Muslims.

When the king of England learnt about the large numbers of pilgrims visiting Jerusalem, he sent a message to the sultan to stop the visitors and suggested that he should not permit anyone to enter except those carrying a sign or a message from him. The Franks were terribly grieved when they heard about this and everyday they would come in large numbers including leaders and kings in disguise.

The sultan hospitably received them and offered them all they needed. He told them that it was their king's request to prevent them from entering Jerusalem; however, he allowed them to perform pilgrimage ignoring their king's request. He then apologized to the

king saying that he could not prevent those who had crossed such far distances to visit that sacred place. The king of England became very ill and so he left on Wednesday night, the 29^{th} of Sha`ban, and it was then said that he had died. He walked along with Amalric and his leaders towards Acre leaving no one in Jaffa but the sick and helpless. The sultan gave the soldiers permission to return to their homes; so the soldiers of Irbil, Mosul, Sinjar, and al-Hisn departed.

[499] He (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) announced his intention to perform *Hajj*.

The Judge said:

The sultan ordered that all the soldiers who would like to perform *Hajj* should register their names so as to count those who would be accompanying them on the way. Lists were then written of all the provisions required and were sent to the countries to be prepared.

[500] When Judge al-Fadil learnt about the sultan's intention to perform *Hajj*, he sent him a message advising him to give up the whole idea, saying, "The Franks have not yet left the Levant or forgotten about Jerusalem, and they cannot be trusted in their truce. Therefore, it will not be safe to leave the city in order to perform *Hajj*, especially that our soldiers are no longer en masse. The enemies may simply take Jerusalem by surprise, may Allah forbid. It will thus be lost and your *Hajj* will then be counted as a great sin and an unforgivable mistake. Do not forget that the pilgrims of Iraq and Khurasan are more than two thousand and three hundred, and it may be said that the sultan has sought revenge and is disturbing this *Hajj* season. So, give up the idea or we shall suffer the worst of consequences. Think over the words of your humble servant, and bear in mind, our sire, that relieving people from oppression is much more

important than any other kind of worship, especially when such oppression is widespread. In Damascus for instance, the peasants suffer intolerable injustice, and in the Valley of Bardi and az-Zabadani immorality is spreading everywhere and killing has become unobjectionable. In addition, some of the Muslim ports need to be fortified and be provided with ammunition, along with our dire need to evaluate the land tax according to the people's incomes. The latest problem is not new for we have talked much about it, but much more important issues occupy our sire like the war against the Franks. Yet, when such a war ended owing to the reconciliation that took place, the problem of having an empty treasury must then become the first priority."

The process of reformation and fortification in Jerusalem continued from the era of the sultan until 616 A.H. (1219 A.C.). The city was destroyed in Muharram of that year owing to the return of the Franks and their spreading throughout the countries. In 615 A.H. (1218 A.C.), king al-`Adil Abu Bakr ibn Ayyub, the sultan's brother, died and the people were dispersed after the destruction of the city. During that year, the Franks came upon the port of Damietta. They kept up a siege until they managed to take it after having gone through the same experience in Acre. The Muslims then took it back, killed some of the Franks and took others as captives. But once again the Franks took hold of it by reconciliation in 625 A.H. (1228 A.C.) and started building part of it. They were then forced to leave it twice; once by king an-Nasir Saladin Dawud ibn al-Mu`azhzham Sharaf ad-Din ibn al-`Adil Abi Bakr ibn Ayyub. A poet said:

A habit that became as sure as fate
Is always ascribed to al-Aqsa the great

Whenever an infidel its yard desecrate
Almighty sent him a defender to eliminate
This had happened in ancient days
Again it occurred in recent date

Then the Franks captured Tiberias and Ashkelon, but were later forced to leave them in 645 A.H. (1247 A.C.) during the reign of king Najm ad-Din ibn Ayyub.

Chapter CXII

The Sultan's Travel from Jerusalem to Damascus

Judge Abu al-Mahasin said:

The sultan stayed in Jerusalem and permitted the soldiers to return to their countries. He prepared to travel to Egypt without thinking about performing *Hajj*. He remained like this until he was sure that the ship of the king of England was heading for his country in the beginning of Shawwal. Only then did the sultan decide to enter the coastal cities and examine the marine forts up to Baniyas, and then to enter Damascus and stay there for few days. Then, he would return to Jerusalem and thence to Egypt to see how things were going on.

The sultan ordered me to stay in Jerusalem until he returned in order to supervise the reformation of the king's hospital and run the school that he had built there.

He added:

When the sultan arrived in Beirut, the prince of Antioch went to meet him and treated him with great kindness and generosity. The sultan walked to Damascus after examining the conditions of the coastal forts and supporting the armies there. On Wednesday morning, the 16th of Shawwal, he entered Damascus and his sons al-Afdal, azh-Zhahir, azh-Zhafir and his young children were there. He loved that country and preferred it to all other countries. On Thursday morning, he sat with the people who were keen to see him after his long absence. He listened to their complaints, relieved them from oppression and spread justice everywhere.

At the end of Ramadan, al-`Adil asked for the sultan's permission to move to al-Karak to see how things were going there, and he did. Later he returned and asked for the sultan's permission to go to the countries that the sultan had granted him along the Euphrates. He arrived in Damascus on the 17th of Dhu al-Qa`dah. The sultan went out to meet him and they both went hunting. They entered Damascus on the 21st of Dhu al-Qa`dah.

The sultan stayed in Damascus hunting with his brother and children, taking rounds in the city, and visiting all the places of his childhood. It was like a vacation for him and a relief from all the exhaustion and restlessness he had suffered during the war with the Franks. Actually, it was his last farewell to his country. He then sent me a message when I was in Jerusalem summoning me during a very bitter and rainy winter.

Events of 589 A.H. (1193 A.C.)

Al-`Imad said:

The sultan was staying in Damascus receiving the countries' deputies, bestowing his generosity on his guests, overwhelming the poor and needy with charity, and listening to the people's complaints. He later went on a hunting for fifteen days along with his brother and they went far into the desert. On Monday the 11th of Safar, he returned and it was the same return day of the pilgrims of the Levant. The sultan went out to meet them, and upon seeing them, his eyes were filled with tears that he missed such a great honor. He asked them about the conditions in Mecca and about the amount of grain and charity that had reached them from Egypt.

Chapter CXIII

The Sultan's Sickness and His Death

[501] The Judge said:

On Saturday night, the sultan felt terribly weak, and at midnight, he contracted yellow fever. On Saturday morning, the 16th of Safar, the symptoms of fever were obvious on him but he did not show that in front of the people. Later on, Judge al-Fadil and I went to him, and then his son al-Afdal also came and we sat with him for a long time. He complained a lot about his inability to sleep.

We left him and were invited to eat in the presence of his son al-Afdal. Judge al-Fadil was not accustomed to eating there and so he left. When I entered the southern hall where the banquet was, I saw al-Afdal sitting in his father's place. Overwhelmed by astonishment and gloom, I left.

Subsequently, the sultan's illness worsened and Judge al-Fadil and I used to visit him everyday. He used to complain about the pain in his head. The physicians agreed to do venesection for him; however, his condition became even worse. His body became dry and it was very difficult for him to breathe. His state worsened until he seemed to have no strength at all.

[502] On the sixth day of his illness, we sat him up and helped him lean his back against a pillow. He was given water to drink after the medicine he had taken, but he found it too hot and so asked for another glass. The second time, he found the water too cold; so with great self-control and without getting angry, he (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) said, "*Subhana* Allah! Is there no better water?"

We, Judge al-Fadil and I, left him while we were weeping. The Judge said, "Look at the good merits that Muslims are about to turn their back on. I swear by Allah, had it been someone else, he would have thrown the glass at the one who had brought it."

Then, his health got even worse and he became unconscious. On the 9th day, he was overwhelmed by shivering and refused to take anymore medicine. The whole atmosphere of the city became charged with indescribable depression and grief.

We used to wait for night then we would go to the sultan's palace to see him. The people used to wait for us every night to learn about his state. They could tell everything from our facial expressions.

On the 10th day, he was given two injections and was somehow better than before. He drank some barley juice and we were all thrilled and filled with hope. However, in the morning, we were told that he was perspiring profusely and his body became dehydrated and terribly weak.

Seeing that his father was actually dying, king al-Afdal decided to take a pledge from the people. He sat in Dar ar-Ridwan, that was known to be his place, and sent for the judges and ordered them to make him a brief copy of an oath that would include a pledge of allegiance to the sultan during his life and after his death. He apologized to the people and justified his action by saying that it was only a traditional precautionary measure taken by all kings.

On Wednesday night, the 27th of Safar, the 12th night of his illness, the sultan became even weaker. Judge al-Fadil, Ibn az-Zakiyy and I were summoned and king al-Afdal suggested that we should spend the night there. Judge al-Fadil did not allow the people to wait for us to know about the sultan's state, for if we did not leave the castle, there would certainly be tremendous chaos. Instead, he suggested that we should summon sheikh Abu Ja`far al-Qurtubi, for he was a pious man and he wanted him to be present at the time of the sultan's death to keep the women away and remind the sultan of the two testimonies.

[503] Skeikh Abu Ja`far narrated that when he came to the verse that reads, ﴿*He is Allah, than Whom there is La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the All-Knower of the Unseen and the Seen...*﴾[1], he heard the sultan saying, "It is true."

Really, it was out of Allah's Mercy and Grace that he was able to utter these words which reflected the good end of his life. His death (may Allah have mercy upon him) was on Wednesday the 27th of

1. Al-Hashr: 22.

Safar 589 A.H. (1193 A.C.). In the early morning of that day, Judge al-Fadil hurried to the castle and there he attended the sultan's death; but I was too late.

[504] I was told that when sheikh Abu Ja`far came to the verse that reads, ﴾*La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), in Him I put my trust...*﴿[1], the sultan smiled, his face beamed with joy, and then he died. That day was one of the worst days in the history of Islam. The castle, the country, and the whole world sank in melancholy. People expressed great sorrow and continued to weep and wail for a long time.

They washed the sultan and put him in his shroud. After the *Zhuhr* Prayer, he was brought out in a coffin covered with a dress. On seeing his coffin, loud cries were heard and the people made a terrible noise as if the whole world was crying out of sorrow. Rows and rows of people offered the Funeral Prayer over him, one group followed the other.

The first to lead the people in prayer was Judge Muhyi ad-Din ibn az-Zakiyy. The body of the sultan (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) was taken back to his place in al Bustan where he had spent his last days, and he was buried in the western part of it. He was put in his grave just before the `*Asr* Prayer.

During the day, his son azh-Zhafir came down to meet the people and console them. King al-Afdal wrote to his brothers and uncles to inform them of the sad event. The following day, he opened the doors of the castle for the jurisprudents and the scholars to receive the people's condolences. The people came day and night to recite and listen to the Noble Qur'an and pray for the sultan (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him).

1. At-Tawbah: 129.

Muhammad ibn al-Qadisi said:

On Saturday, the 13th of Rabi` al-Awwal, news of the sultan's death reached Baghdad. It was said that his sword was buried with him according to the orders of al-Fadil, who justified it saying, 'So as to lean against it on his way to Paradise.' It was also said that the shroud was bought from the money of al-Fadil who washed him together with the orator of Damascus.

[505] Judge al-Fadil wrote:

On the same night of the sultan's death, a man saw a vision as if someone was saying, 'Tonight Yusuf has come out of prison." This coincides with the *hadith* in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*The world is the prison of the believer and the Paradise of the disbeliever.*"[1] It was true that Yusuf was imprisoned in our world; especially when coming to know the bliss he will have in the Hereafter. May Allah open the gates of Paradise for him; as Paradise was the ultimate goal for which he fought against the enemies of Islam.

Chapter CXIV

The Sultan's Legacy and Manners

[506] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

When the sultan died, he left behind forty-seven dirhams and one golden dinar. He left no houses, property, gardens, or farms.

1. Reported by Muslim.

[507] Al-`Imad said:

The sultan (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) left seventeen sons and one young daughter. He had many great characteristics. He left only one dinar and thirty-six dirhams because he used to spend generously in all walks of charity, and was fond of spending his money on *Jihad*. He never rejected anyone that asked him for anything. If he did not have the thing they needed, he would tell them to wait until he had it. He was like a killing machine to the disbelievers but with the believers he was very generous; he even compensated every soldier for injury or any loss he might face.

They calculated that he had granted twelve thousand horses to the soldiers who participated in *Jihad* during the three years and one month - from the time of the Franks arrival at Acre, on Rajab, 585 A.H. (1189 A.C.) until their departure in Sha`ban, 588 A.H. (1192 A.C.). Furthermore, he spent large sums on treating horses that was injured in the fight. He had no horse of his own to ride; whenever he joined a battle, he would borrow one.

[508] He added:

He only used to wear linen, cotton, and wool, and if he received any other clothing he would give it in charity. His assemblies were free from joking and mockery, and were filled with wisdom and piety. He never uttered a rude word. He used to be harsh with the polytheists but lenient with the pious. He was fond of listening to the *hadiths*, sitting with scholars, and talking with jurisprudents and judges; thus, he had an excellent background about legal rulings.

Anyone sitting with him would not feel that he was sitting with the sultan, but rather with a brother or a friend. He was patient, tolerant, and forgiving as well as pious, pure, and loyal. He had a strong self-control and he never frowned or scolded a beggar.

[509] He continued:

In one of his journeys, prince Ayyub ibn Kanan came late and when he arrived, the sultan asked him about the reason for his delay, he mentioned something about a debt. Hence, the sultan sent for the debtors and paid them their money which amounted to about twelve thousand Egyptian dinars.

[510] He added:

I also remember that during my first journey with him to Egypt in 572 A.H. (1176 A.C.) the one responsible for his divan was investigated and it was found that he owed the treasury seventy thousand dinars. However, the sultan did not mention them or even show him that he knew about the matter. However, the man did not deny it, and instead of leaving him jobless, he put him in charge of the divan of his army.

[511] He went on to say:

When we were in Harran, he overwhelmed the poor and needy with his charity and, furthermore, he wrote to his representatives in other countries to do the same.

[512] He would be furious if he saw grave sins being committed, but at the same time, he used to overlook venial errors. He used to advocate good deeds and prohibit the bad ones. He was keen that his followers, princes, and soldiers should be virtuous and pious. He once saw with me an inkwell decorated with silver and he expressed his resentment. I told him, "But sheikh Abu Muhammad Abu al-Ma`ali said that it is permissible." However, regardless of my own statement, I never used it when I was in his presence.

[513] He used to perform the five prayers at their exact times along with the supererogatory prayers. He never prayed except in congregation, and he never delayed a prayer. He used to have an Imam constantly with him, but if the Imam was not present, he would pray behind any pious scholar who might be sitting with him.

[514] He committed himself to the *Shari`ah* and never listened to a fortuneteller or believed in good or bad omens. Whenever he was determined to do something, he would put his trust only in Allah and then proceed. His favorite days or times were only those favored in *Shari`ah*.

He was a great supporter of monotheism and a strong opponent of heresies. He followed the Shafi`i School. He was friendly with the pious, and firm with the sinners. He filled the whole world with his generosity and kindness.

Chapter CXV

What We Witnessed of His Persistence in Applying the Fundamentals of Religion

[515] The sultan (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) was a good Muslim with a sound creed devoid of innovations. He used to remember Almighty Allah all the time. He learnt from famous scholars and jurisprudents and so he was skillful in religious conversation.

Sheikh Qutb ad-Din an-Naysaburi (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) gathered all the religious information that he could ever

need. The sultan appreciated this very much and even used to teach it to his children and make them study it by heart. I myself saw them memorizing it before him. He insisted on teaching them while they were very young so that the knowledge would be firmly fixed in their minds.

[516] He used to perform the prayers with great punctuality and always in congregation. Even when he was sick, he would call the Imam alone and pray behind him. He also used to perform all the supererogatory prayers and pray at night. If he did not wake up, he would perform them before the Morning Prayer. He never quitted a prayer as long as he was conscious; he only left it in the last three days of his life when he was in a coma. I saw him during his last days standing while praying. Whenever he was riding his horse at the time of prayer, he used to dismount and pray at once. He did not possess enough wealth to require him to pay *Zakah*.

[517] He would spend most of his money on supererogatory charity. He missed many days of fasting in Ramadan owing to the fact that he was sick. Judge al-Fadil counted those days for him, and he (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) had already started fasting those days in Jerusalem the year he died. He fasted over a month to make up for the days he had missed because of his sickness and his participation in *Jihad*. Even though the physician used to advise him not to fast, he did not listen and used to say, "I do not know what will happen in the future." It was as if he wanted to relieve his conscience before dying and to make up for the days he missed.

He was always determined to perform *Hajj*, especially in the year that he died. In that year, he gave his orders to make the necessary arrangements for *Hajj*, but unfortunately the time was short and he did not have enough money. Thus, he postponed it to the following year, but he died before being able to complete it.

[518] The sultan (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) was fond of listening to the Glorious Qur'an. He used to test his Imam and insist that he should be skillful and expert on the different Qur'an sciences as well as memorizing and reciting it. Also, he used to ask for a reciter to read the Qur'an to him at night. He once passed by a little boy was reciting the Glorious Qur'an before his father in a sweet voice. He liked the boy's voice while recitating and so brought him close to him, gave him a share of his own food and granted him and his father part of a farm.

[519] His heart was submissive and he was often very close to tears. Whenever he listened to the Glorious Qur'an, he would shiver and tears would roll down his face.

[520] He also loved to listen to and to read *hadiths*. Whenever he heard a skillful sheikh, he would call him and summon his children and followers to listen to him. If that sheikh disliked the kings' assemblies, he himself would go to him. For instance, he used to go to Imam Ahmad as-Silafi in Alexandria and he narrated many *hadiths* on his authority. He was also fond of reading *hadiths* by himself. He used to send for me and read me the books of *hadith*, and whenever he passed a *hadith* where there was a certain lesson, his eyes would soon be filled with tears.

[521] He (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) used to glorify the rituals of religion. He had unshakable faith in the Resurrection, the Paradise as a reward for the righteous, and the Hell-fire as a punishment for the evil-doers. He hated the philosophers, al-Mu`attilah[1] and

1. A group of people who deny all the Names and Attributes of Allah

ad-Dahriyyah[1]. Thus, he ordered his son azh-Zhahir, the ruler of Aleppo, to kill a young man known as As-Suhrawardi who used to defy and oppose *Shari`ah*.

[522] He believed in Allah's Mercy, put his full trust in Him, and sought refuge with Him. This is proven through many situations such as that when he was afraid that the Franks might enter Jerusalem and his men refused to go there for fear of being besieged. Then, he resorted to Almighty Allah and - with all his heart - prayed to Him to help him overcome that problem. His prayer was granted and the whole situation was resolved.

[523] He added:

He (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) was fair, kind, and merciful. Every Monday and Thursday, he used to sit and listen to the people's petitions in a general assembly attended by jurisprudents, judges, and scholars. He allowed the opposition parties to attend, whether they were young or old. He used to do this even while traveling and he accept all their submitted petitions. He used to sit with the court clerk for an hour during the day or the night in order to write his comments and opinions concerning every petition. He never let down anyone who called on him for help.

I saw him when a man from Damascus, called Ibn Zuhayr, appealed for his aid against Taqiyy ad-Din. The sultan immediately sent for him to attend the court assembly and assigned Judge Amin ad-Din Abu al-Qasim to deliver his judgment regarding that dispute. Though Taqiyy ad-Din was his (the sultan's) close and endeared relative, he was ordered to sit side by side with his opponent and when

1 A group of people who believes in the eternity of matter, and asserts that the duration of this world is limitless, and deny the Day of Resurrection and Judgment

it turned out that he was guilty, the sultan supported the side of right, as was his habit.

[524] He added:

One day, I was sitting in the court assembly in Jerusalem when well-known old merchant called `Umar al-Khulati came to me and said, "My opponent is the sultan himself and we hear that you stand only on the side of right." I said, "In what case is he your opponent?" He said, "Sunqur al-Khulati remained a slave of mine until his death. He had great wealth, which was all mine; but when he died, the sultan took it. Now I am asking to have it back." I said, "What has kept you so long?" He answered, "Rights do not become invalid by time, and the contract with me proves that he was still mine when he died." I took the contract from him, and found on it the signature of Sunqur al-Khulati, and the witnesses on that contract testified that they had not known any other master for him except `Umar al-Khulati.

I was amazed by that story and when I informed the sultan, he sent for the man and made him sit in front of me, and then he descended and sat side by side with him. The man then presented his claim, opened his contract, and read the date written in it. Here the sultan (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) said, "I have witnesses who would testify that Sunqur was mine in Egypt, and that I bought him along with eight other slaves on a date one year earlier than the date written in your contract, and that he was mine until I set him free." He then sent for some of the princes who came to confirm his story and they mentioned the same date that he had mentioned. Hence, the man was embarrassed and became upset. Thus, I told the sultan, "O sire! The man did this only because he was seeking your generosity, so do not let him return disappointed." The sultan said, "Then, this is a different kettle of fish." And so he was very generous with him.

Thus, take note of this situation and realize how modest, pious, and strong he was and how generous and tolerant he acted when he had the right to act otherwise."

[525] Al-'Imad went on to say:

His generosity was obvious. When he conquered Amid, Ibn Qara Arsalan asked him for it and he gave it to him. I was also there when some delegates from Jerusalem came to him and there was nothing in the treasury to give them, so he sold a village belonging to the treasury and gave the money to them. He used to be generous whether in times of prosperity or in that of hardships. The treasurers used to save some of the money in case of unexpected emergencies. They wanted to be prepared, without telling him, lest he gave it all away in charity.

I once heard him saying, "Some people may regard money as worthless just as they regard the dust." It seemed that he was referring to himself. He used to give the people more than that they asked for while smiling at them as if he had not given them anything. Moreover, the people were always asking him for more and I never heard him refusing to help. I was even embarrassed when coming to inform him of their numerous requests. He was also generous in gifting people. In Acre alone, he gave away ten thousand horses. O Allah, You have bestowed generosity upon him and You are the Most Generous, so bestow Your Mercy and Pleasure upon him for You are the Most Merciful.

[526] He added:

He (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) was a notably brave man. He was firm, strong, fearless, and undeterred. I saw how steadfast he was during the war with the Franks though they were great in number and possessed highly developed equipment; but all this only added to his strength and patience.

One night, about seventy Frankish boats arrived at Acre, and I continued to count them from *Zhuhr* Prayer until *Maghrib* Prayer. He was not affected; on the contrary, he appeared completely undaunted. He used to give the soldiers permission to leave at the beginning of winter without fearing the enemy's large numbers. I asked Baliyan ibn Barazan, an eminent Frankish king, while sitting with him on the day of reconciliation, about their numbers, and he said, "We were about five or six hundred thousand." I asked, "How many died?" He said, "Those who were killed were about a hundred thousand; those who died or drowned were unknown, and only a few returned safely."

[527] He said:

He used to roam around the enemy camp once or twice a day when we were close to them. During the fierce fighting, he would take a boy and review his soldiers on the right and left flanks ordering them to stand in certain positions and urging them to fight bravely.

[528] He was fond of listening to *hadith* even in the battlefield. Once I said to him, "The *hadiths* were heard in all honorable places except for the battlefield. Would you like to be the first to do that?" He said he would and he listened to the part he had assigned for himself that day. We listened to it while mounting our horses in the battlefield, and he would listen for a while and then proceed on his way for a while.

[529] I never saw him paying the enemy's huge numbers any attention or ever regarding them as threat. Yet, he never stopped thinking or planning, and he used to divide the tasks between his men calmly and patiently. Moreover, when the Muslims were defeated in the lands of Acre, he remained firm and steady and withdrew to the mountain with his men. There, he kept on inciting them to return to

the battlefield until his endeavors bore fruit and they returned and killed about seven thousand enemy soldiers. Despite the tremendous equipment and machines that the enemy possessed, the sultan remained firm, patient, and undismayed. However, when he felt the weakness and wear.ness of the Muslims, he approved of the suggested reconciliation. He became sick many times and was afflicted by many dreadful situations, however, he never panicked or lost hope in Allah's Mercy.

[530] He added.

He (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) was committed to *Jihad* and never spent a dirham after his participation in *Jihad* except in charity. He was so infatuated by *Jihad* that he would talk about it all the time. All his attention was directed to the necessities of *Jihad*; equipment and soldiers. He liked those who would remind him of it or encourage him to do it. He even abandoned everything for its sake; his family, children, and all his pleasures. He was contented to live in a simple tent that could be easily blown by the wind, and one night it fell on him while he was in Acre. If he hadn't been in the tower, he would have been killed, yet despite this, he remained fearless and undeterred.

[531] Judge Ibn Shaddad said:

Whenever a man wanted to get close to him, he would speak to him about *Jihad* or urge him to participate in it. Many books were written for him about *Jihad*. I myself wrote a book concerning the merits of *Jihad* and in it, I mentioned all the verses and *hadith*s related to the subject. He loved this book and used to read it every now and then.

[532] He added:

He seized Kawkab in Dhu al-Qa`dah 584 A.H. (1188 A.C.). Then he gave his troops permission to leave. The Egyptian soldiers, headed by his brother al-`Adil, started their journey towards Egypt. He accompanied him in order to bid him farewell and at the same time to offer the `Id Prayer in Jerusalem. When he finished the prayer, he thought of walking with them to Ashkelon then returning from the coast to examine the cities up to Acre in order to arrange things there. They advised him not to do so, as he only had a few men whereas all the Franks had gathered in Tyre: but he paid them no attention.

He bid his brother farewell in Ashkelon, and then we walked along the coast heading toward Acre. It was winter at that time and the sea was very rough. It was my first time to see the sea and witness its fury. I was terribly frightened and imagined that if anyone offered me the whole world in return for sailing even for one mile, I would certainly refuse. I even thought it was ridiculous that people would risk their lives and sail in order to earn their living. Furthermore, I approved of the religious opinion which says that the testimony of a sailor should not be accepted.

My thoughts were interrupted by the sultan who said to me, "If Allah allows me to conquer the rest of the coast, I shall divide the cities and write my will, then I will sail to invade the polytheists' territories until I leave none intact, or I would rather die." His words had a great effect upon me, especially since they contradicted all my thoughts. I felt he was the bravest man I had ever known and the most determined in supporting Allah's Religion. I then related my thoughts to him and said, "How nice of you to think this way, however, you should let your soldiers do so alone, for you are the shield of Islam and we should never risk such a shield." He said, "What is the most

honorable way to die?" I answered. "Dying for the Sake of Allah." He said, "And it is my utmost wish to die this way."

How pure, pious, brave, and bold he was! O Allah, You know how hard he tried to support Your Religion seeking only Your Mercy, so shower him with Your Mercy.

[533] He went on to say:

He was very patient. When we were in Marj Acre, he was in great pain as numerous ulcers had appeared on his body from his waist down to his knees. They made him unable to sit up but only lean on his side whenever he was in his tent. He was unable to sit up or eat and he ordered that his food should be distributed among the people. Yet, he used to ride everyday from the early morning until *Zhuhr* Prayer, and from *`Asr* until *Maghrib* Prayer in order to review his soldiers. Thus, he set an example of outstanding patience. He used to say, "When I mount my horse, I do not feel the pain until I dismount it again. This is only because of Allah s Mercy."

Moreover, when we were in al-Kharrubah, he became ill. When the Franks knew about that, they were happy and decided to march toward the Muslims thinking that they could easily defeat them because of his illness. The following day they marched to the Muslims and when the sultan (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) came to know about this, he mounted his horse despite his illness and prepared his troops for war, placing his sons in the center. He put a handkerchief on his head to protect him from the sun and refused to have a tent set up for him because he did not want to appear weak in the eyes of the enemy. When the enemy came to the head of the river and camped there, he went to a hill in front of them and stayed there until nightfall. Then he ordered his troops to spend their night armed

and he went to the top of the mountain where a simple tent was set up for him. That night the physician and I stayed there to nurse him He would sleep for a while then wake up and so on until morning. The trumpet was then blown and he (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) mounted his horse and the troops prepared themselves. They encircled the enemy and forced them to retreat to the western side of the river.

During that day, he was ready to sacrifice all his sons for the Sake of Allah. He sent his three sons al-Afdal, azh-Zhahir and azh-Zhafir to the battlefield along with all the soldiers who were with him until nobody was left except the physician, some boys and myself. The boys stood carrying the flags and the banners and the enemy imagined there were many soldiers behind them. He stayed in his place and the soldiers continued to ride their horses until the end of the day. He ordered them to spend the night armed just like the night before. By morning the soldiers were ready and started to besiege the enemy just as they had done previously.

[534] He continued:

On a cold and rainy night, I heard him saying, when he was besieging Safad, "We shall not sleep tonight until we finish setting up five catapults." He divided his men into groups and assigned each one to set up a specific catapult. We spent the night doing this, and the messengers kept arriving and informing him of the progress of that mission. By morning everything was ready.

[535] He added:

I saw him while he was reading a letter informing him about the death of his young son, Isma'il. He endured it with great patience and did not tell anybody about it. We even heard about it from someone

else. He showed no sign of his deep sadness except for a few tears (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him).

[536] He went on to say:

When we were fighting the Franks at ar-Ramlah, he received the news of his nephew's death, Taqiyy ad-Din. He summoned his brother al-`Adil, Ibn Jundur, Ibn al-Muqaddim and Ibn ad-Dayah Sabiq ad-Din, and ordered his men to keep the people away from his tent. After that, he showed us the letter and cried so much that we cried without knowing the reason. When he told us why he was crying, I told him and all those around him, "Stop that and ask for Allah's Forgiveness." Thus, he addressed them repeatedly, "Yes, ask for Allah's Forgiveness." He then said, "Do not tell anyone about this."

[537] He continued:

He (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) was so attached to his young children, however, he did not mind being away from them for the sake of Islam. He endured the rough life he was leading just for the Sake of Allah, even though he was capable of living in utter luxury. O Allah, You know that he left all this seeking Your Pleasure, so bestow Your Pleasure on him.

[538] He added:

He (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) was forgiving, patient, tolerant, and had strong self-control. I was in his service in Marj `Uyun before the Franks came to Acre. It was his habit to ride at a certain time, then he would dismount and eat with the people. He would sleep in his own tent for a while until it was time for prayer, then he would pray and sit with me reading something of *hadith* or *Fiqh*.

One day he ate with the people and was about to leave and go to his tent to rest, but someone told him, "It is almost the time of prayer." Thus, he returned and sat down and waited for the prayer.

After a while, he seemed annoyed and was not interested in talking; however, an old and respectable Mameluke approached him and gave him a petition from one of the brave soldiers The sultan said, "I am in a resentful mood right now; keep it for another time." However, the man did not wait and put it in front of his face and opened it forcing him to read it. He read the name and recognized the man, and said, "He is a deserving man." The man said, "Then let our sire sign for him." The sultan said, "I do not have an inkwell with me." He (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) was sitting at the door of his tent, and the inkwell was in the foremost part of it. The man told him, "Here is the inkwell in the foremost part of the tent." This meant that he was ordering the sultan to bring the inkwell. The sultan turned his face and saw it, and then said, "By Allah you are right." He brought the inkwell and signed for him.

Had it been anyone else, the situation would have stirred his anger for who could dare to speak with the ruler in such a way! This only proved his patience and benevolence.

[539] He added:

His mattress was trodden on many times by the people who used to go to him to submit their petitions, but he was never annoyed or vexed. One day, my female mule ran away while I was in his service and it kicked his thigh and hurt him; however, he smiled quietly. Another day, I went to him in Jerusalem and it was a very rainy and windy day and there was a lot of mud. The female mule splashed him with mud so that his clothes were spoilt but he only smiled softly. I even wanted to

walk far away from him because of what had happened, but he refused. He also used to endure the rude words that the oppressed people would sometimes utter; he would always be tolerant and forgiving.

He continued:

He had all honorable virtues, especially manliness, valor, generosity, and a sense of honor. He used to hospitably treat his guests even if they were unbelievers. The prince of Antioch once came to him after reconciliation and asked him for a fief. The sultan gave him al-`Umq, which he had taken from him the year he conquered the coast. I also saw him when the ruler of Sayda came to him, and how he respected and honored him. Furthermore, he spoke to him about the beautiful aspects of Islam attempting to make him embrace it.

[540] He also used to honor whoever might go to him from among the sheikhs, scholars, and the pious men. He used to tell us never to overlook any of them who may pass by, and he would send them a message to honor them.

In 584 A.H. (1188 A.C.), a very pious man known for his knowledge and asceticism passed by us. He was wealthy and his father was the ruler of Tawriz[1]; but he abounded all this for the Sake of Allah. He had performed *Hajj*, and then come to Jerusalem as a visitor. After he concluded his visit, and after he had witnessed the sultan's achievements there, the man decided to visit him. On arriving, I welcomed him and informed the sultan of his arrival. The man thanked the sultan on behalf of Islam and encouraged him to proceed with the good deeds he was doing; then he left and spent the night in my tent. After performing the Morning Prayer, the man bid me farewell and was about to leave. I told him to bid farewell to the sultan

1. A city in Aleppo near to as-Siyaq.

before leaving, but he paid no attention and said, "I only wanted to thank him and I did; I need nothing else from him." He then left and after several nights, the sultan asked about him. When I told him about his departure, he blamed us for not telling him, and said, "How can a man like this come to us and then leave without receiving the honor he deserves?" Thus, I wrote a letter to Muhiy ad-Din, the Judge of Damascus, assigning him to look for the man and to give him the paper that I had enclosed in the letter. In that paper I told him how annoyed the sultan was to know about his departure without bidding him farewell, and I urged him to return. So the man came back and met the sultan who welcomed him wholeheartily and insisted that he should stay for a few days. He gave him a precious robe, nice shoes, many other clothes for his family, friends, and neighbors and an amount of money. The man was very grateful to him and kept on invoking the Almighty for him.

[541] He went on to say:

Once a Frankish captive was standing in front of the sultan. The interpreter asked him, "How do you feel now? The man replied, "Before seeing that face (referring to the sultan), I was really afraid; however, after seeing him and standing in front of him, I am sure that I see nothing but kindness." The sultan thus sympathized with him and set him free.

[542] He continued:

He never insulted any of his companions even if the latter would exceed the boundaries and offend him. For instance, two bags of Egyptian gold were replaced in his treasury with two bags of money; however, he dismissed the people who had done that.

[543] He added:

He (may Allah have mercy upon him) was characterized by his good conduct with a good sense of humor He had an excellent background about the Arabs' pedigree, their battles, their biographies, and even about their horses' genealogy. He also had great knowledge about the wonders of the world and we used to learn a lot from him.

He was very caring and used to ask each of us about our health, and whether we were taking medicine or not, and about our food, drink, etc. He never spoke badly about anyone and never allowed anyone to do so in his presence. He also never uttered a rude word and never used his pen to humiliate a Muslim.

[544] He was a loyal and kind-hearted man. Whenever an orphan knocked on his door, he would treat him kindly, console him, and give him his father's share of food and money; if that orphan had a trusted legal guardian, he would give him his share, or else he would assign an honest person to look after him.

Chapter CXVI

The Division of his Kingdom Among His Sons and Brothers

[545] Al-`Imad said:

King al-Afdal took over Damascus, the coast, and all surrounding cities. He was the one who attended his father's funeral and for a year

he continued to receive the people's condolences. He honored the princes and the virtuous scholars, sheltered his brothers and united his men. Hims, al-Manatir, ar-Rahbah and Ba`albak were included in the kingdom of al-Afdal. Their rulers, al-Mujahid and al-Amjad, along with his brothers, came to meet him in Damascus and that was a proof of their obedience, approval, and intimacy with their brother.

He added:

His son, king al-`Aziz Abu al-Fath `Uthman, took over Egypt with all its provinces and surrounding cities. His political achievements were great. He sent ten thousand Egyptian dinars to renovate Allah's House and supported the ruler, `Iz ad-Din Jurdik. He also continued to send the crops from Egypt to Jerusalem, and owing to his doubts about the Franks' betrayal, he prepared his soldiers and sent them to Jerusalem to defend it.

Aleppo and its forts became under king azh-Zhahir who came to make justice prevail and he was keen to fortify it and defend it against any possible invasion. The ruler of Hamah, the son of Taqiyy ad-Din, then joined him; thus king azh-Zhahir honored him and promised to protect him.

I commented:

He was like a shelter for his brothers and sovereignty remained in his line of descendants. His brothers and nephews were close to him and depended upon him in almost all of their affairs. When the Tatars invaded these territories in Safar 658 A.H. (1260 A.C.), this dynasty came to an end.

Chapter CXVII
The Death of Judge al-Fadil

[546] Al-`Imad said:

In 596 A.H. (1200 A.C.), all Muslims were afflicted by the death of Judge al-Fadil who died in his house in Cairo on Tuesday the 6th of Rabi` al-Akhir. He was an extraordinarily pious man who left no good deed without doing it, and his favors overwhelmed all the people. He used to spend his money in various kinds of charity, especially in setting free Muslim captives. He also used to support the Shafi`i and the Maliki students and provide them with a school. He established a school for orphans. He was a man of justice who would always support the right; thus, he was loved and obeyed by all people, even by the sultan himself.

[547] He was the sultan's main consultant, for the latter never made a step in his conquests until he had asked for his opinion. He was my great teacher and I learnt a great deal from him.

[548] He (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) was very skillful in writing and was extremely eloquent; his words were concise and effective. Who could ever replace him! Praise be to Allah to Whom we shall all return.

[549] At Taj Abi al Fath Al Balti composed the following lines about him:

May Allah bliss his servant `Abd ar-Rahim
Who assumes mercy verbatim
Truly he follows the right path
He is known as virtue incarnate
How sweet is virtue to be his garment
The various branches of knowledge he gained
The piety of Prophet `Isa he learned
And the guidance of Musa, whom Allah addressed
In the night prayer he finds delight
And the Qur'anic verses to recite

In the history of Abu `Ali Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Isma`il al-Qalyubi I read that the day in which Judge al-Fadil died was the same day when king Al-`Adil entered Egypt and took it from his nephew. It was said that Al-`Adil entered from a door and we came out from another hurrying with the funeral.

Most of the Egyptians mentioned that his library consisted of about one hundred thousand volumes and he used to collect them from many territories.

[550] He added:

I heard that when Judge al-Fadil knew that al-`Adil had taken Egypt, he prayed that Allah would let him die for fear that the latter's minister, Safiyy ad-Din ibn Shukr, would send for him or insult him, for they were not on good terms.

I said:

Judge Diya' ad-Din ibn Abi al-Hajjaj (may the Mercy of Allah be upon him) told me that Judge al-Fadil never served anyone after sultan Saladin, not even his sons; rather the whole territory came to serve him until his death.

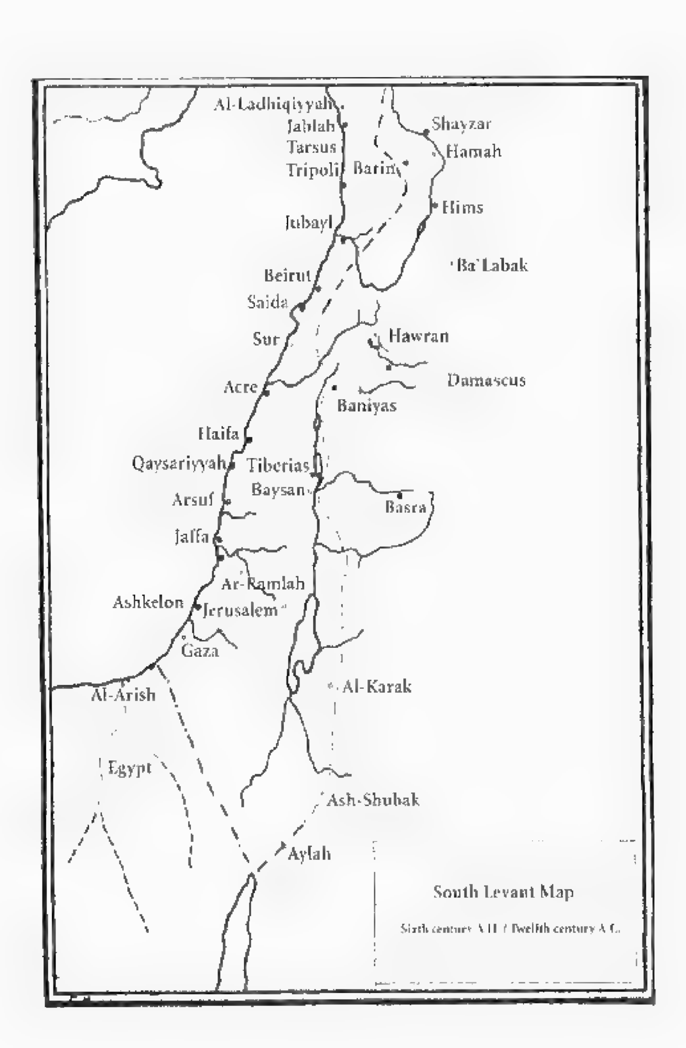
Al-`Imad said:

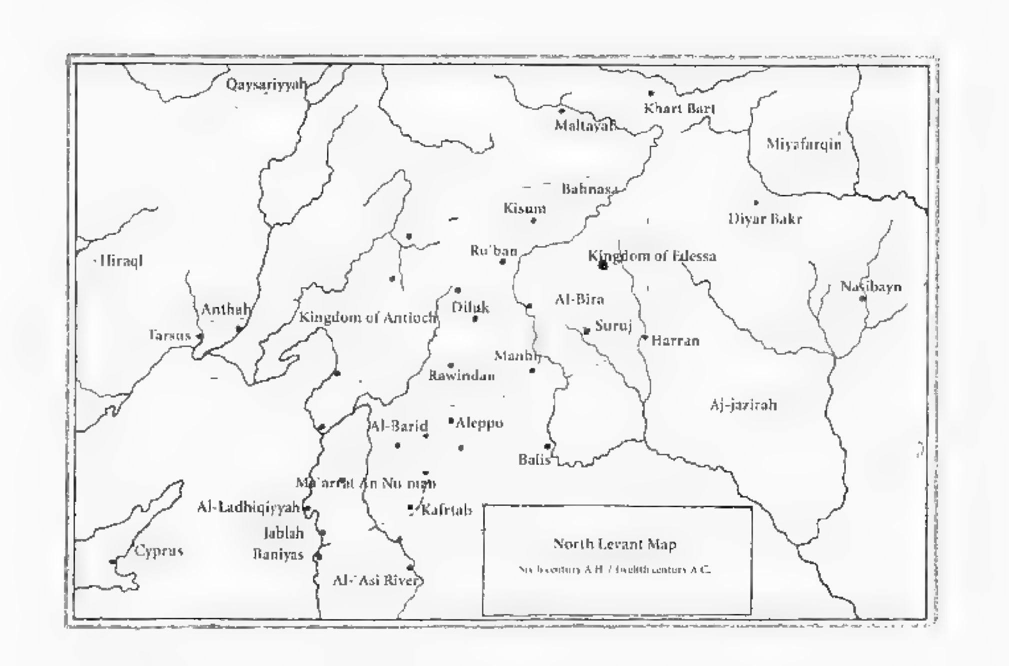
When al-`Adil came to Egypt, he visited the grave of ash-Shafi`i and then the grave of Judge al-Fadil (may Allah have mercy on them all).

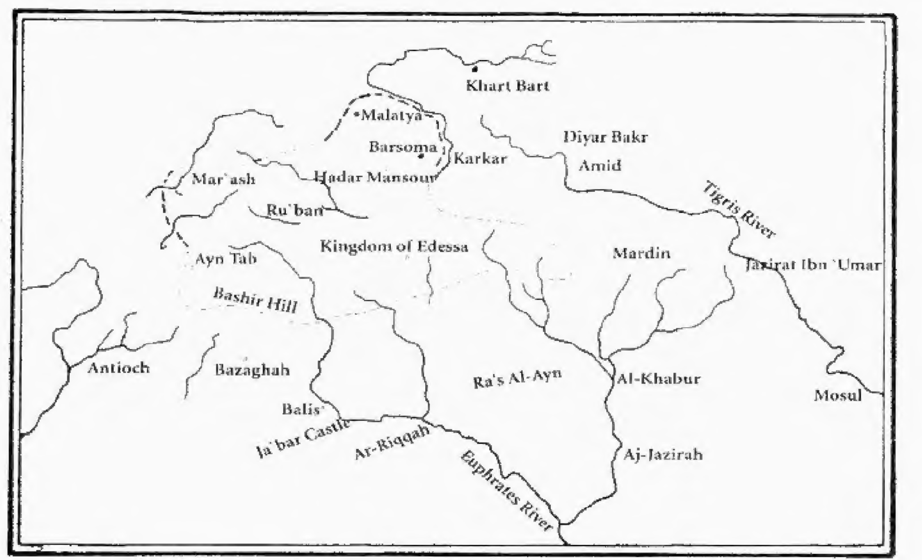
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Al-Ladhiqiyyah
Jablah
Tarsus
Tripoli
Barin
Shayzar
Hamah
Hims
Jubayl
Ba'Labak
Beirut
Saida
Sur
Hawran
Acre
Damascus
Baniyas
Haifa
Qaysariyyah
Tiberias
Baysan
Arsuf
Basra
Jaffa
Ar-Ramlah
Ashkelon
Jerusalem
Gaza
Al-Arish
Al-Karak
Egypt
Ash-Shubak
Aylah
South Levant Map
Sixth century A.H. / Twelfth century A.C.


North Levant Map
Qaysariyyah
Khart Bart
Maltayah
Miyafarqin
Bahnasa
Kisum
Diyar Bakr
Hiraql
Ru'ban
Kingdom of Edessa
Nasibayn
Anthah
Kingdom of Antioch
Diluk
Al-Bira
Suruj
Harran
Tarsus
Manbij
Rawindan
Aj-jazirah
Al-Barid
Aleppo
Balis
Al-Ladhiqiyyah
Kafrtab
Jablah
Baniyas
Cyprus
Al-'Asi River



Kingdom of Edessa

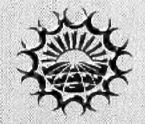
Noble Dynasties contains an account of two great Muslim leaders: Nur ad-Din and Saladin. It traces the history of their two noble dynasties, and offers fascinating insight into their lives along with the contributions they made to the Muslim world.

Nur ad-Din and Saladin share many common features. The former managed to cultivate the image of a pious, reserved and just man; one who was thoroughly devoted to *Jihad* against the enemies of Islam. The latter, though he was strongly influenced by the former, was often associated with Jerusalem and the liberation of the Muslim lands.

Both were concerned with Islamic issues in every place. Their objectives were (1) to unify the Arab World, (2) to mobilize the Muslims, both socially, with the aid of powerful propaganda, and militarily, in order to liberate the occupied territories, above all Jerusalem.

Born in Jeddah, Dr. **Muhammad Musa Al-Shareef** graduated from the Faculty of Shari'ah, Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University, in 1408 A.H. He obtained his M.A. and Ph.D. in the Qur'an and the Sunnah from Faculty of Usul Ad-Din (Theology) - Umm Al-Qura University. He is an assistant professor in the Department of Islamic Studies, King Abdul Aziz University. He is well read in the exegesis of the Qur'an and works as an Imam and orator in Jeddah. He is also a member of different organizations and authorities, such as the Society of Da'wah and the Glorious Qur'an of the International Islamic Relief Agency. He delivers various lectures and talk shows in Saudi Arabia.

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ISLAMIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Tel: 00966-2-6656994 - Fax: 00966-2-6632478

P.O. Box: 11203 Jeddah 21453 K.S.A

E-mail: info@islamic-ef.org